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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Should non-NMI descent U.S. citizens be allowed to vote on issues relating to Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

MAHARLIKA

The United Filipino Organization chips in for a Kagman High School student.

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President Obama launches a reshaping and shrinking of the military.

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LIFE & STYLE

First lady Michelle Obama tapes an appearance on "iCarly."

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Fund portfolio down to $256.7 million. PAGE 3

DESPITE YEAR-LONG TALKS OF GROWING ECONOMY

Of 40 new laws, only 1 for revenue generation

» Torres, Camacho with most bills signed into law

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Despite many lawmakers' yearlong pronouncements about doing everything to help revive the economy, only one of the 40 bills that became law in 2011 was actually aimed at revenue-generation, based on a *Saipan Tribune* review of government records.

Camacho

Torres

That single revenue-generating law signed last year gives incentives to travel agencies for bringing in more tourists to the CNMI and charges passengers from non-U.S. destinations a new $15 fee that will be used to market the CNMI as a tourist destination and recover costs incurred for enforcement of customs and quarantine laws.

But even if Public Law 17-58 is already in place, its actual implementation has yet to take place due to the absence of program rules. PL 17-58 is just an amendment to PL 17-29 signed early last year, so these two are counted only as one revenue-generating measure.

Of 29 members of the House and Senate, 22 had at least one bill that was signed into public law last year. Most of the 29 lawmakers are facing re-election, should they choose

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IN BRIEF

Lawmakers with bills that became public laws in 2011

LAWMAKER	NUMBER OF BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW
Rep. George Camacho (Ind-Saipan)	4
Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan)	4
Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota)	3
Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan)	3
Rep. Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan)	3
Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota)	2
Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan)	2
Rep. Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan)	2
Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan)	2
Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan)	2
Sen. Pete Reyes (R-Saipan)	2
Former Rep. Diego Benavente	1
Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan)	1
Sen. Ralp Torres (R-Saipan)	1
Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota)	1
Rep. Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan)	1
Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan)	1
Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan)	1
Rep. Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan)	1
Sen. Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian)	1
Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan)	1
Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian)	1

Sources: Legislative Bureau, Executive Branch

PH village searched after deadly landslide

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Authorities resumed searching Friday for victims of a landslide that killed at least 22 people when it slammed into a remote Philippine gold-mining village where miners work their small-scale claims with pickaxes.

Early reports of as many as 100 additional people missing were overblown, officials said, but they added that they had no good estimate of how many people remained unaccounted for. ***See related story on Page 11.***

The landslide came down with a loud whoosh hours before dawn Thursday on a mountainside dotted with mine shafts and crude shanties with corrugated metal roofs in Napnapan village in the southern province of Compostela Valley.

"It was like a dump truck unloading gravel and sand," said survivor Darwin Aguinawon, 27. "In only three seconds, our house came rolling down the slope."

It was the area's second deadly landslide

See LANDSLIDE on Page 4

AP

In this photo released by the Philippine Army, residents dig through the rubble following a landslide that occurred at the small-scale mining community of Pantukan, Compostela Valley in southern Philippines Thursday Jan. 5, 2012.

Local

CUC probes whether tampering with public water is federal offense

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

In an effort to stop the rampant theft and vandalism of public water utilities, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is trying to find out if these crimes can be considered federal offenses that may be prosecuted by the federal government.

CUC said in a statement that it is currently working with the Office of the Attorney General for the prosecution of these cases and is appealing to the public for help in reporting any suspicious activities.

"We will continue to ask for the public's assistance in reporting any suspicious activities or information regarding the thefts and vandalisms. Additionally, we will continue to work closely with the AGO in the prosecution of those found liable. Moreover, we are investigating whether these events are federal offenses in that the thieves are tampering with public water, thus impacting public health," the CUC statement said.

Because it is a non-profit service provider, CUC said that there is no way to directly absorb losses from thefts because costs are passed on to customers.

Saipan Tribune was told that remote well sites in three areas are the ones mostly targeted by copper wire thieves. These are wells in the airport area, Dandan, and Kagman. Suspects, it said, are being reported and forwarded to the authorities for proper handling of cases.

CUC said that thefts and vandalism incidents cause great inconvenience to the public as they affect the delivery of needed water services.

Earlier this week, CUC divulged the rampant theft of power drop lines at the island's wells, resulting in the non-production of water supply to affected areas.

Two wells in Obyan were recently vandalized, causing loss of services to many areas. Power drop lines to wells in the Kagman area have also been stolen.

According to CUC deputy executive director Alan Fletcher, the agency has 145 wells; 26 chlorine stations; one slow sand filter; 18 boosters; 17 reservoirs; and 212-mile pipelines.

For wastewater, CUC has two secondary wastewater treatment plant; 42 lift stations; and 78-mile collection lines.

'Fate of hospital's loan plan up to the Legislature'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The decision on who will sign for a potential loan that will be used to modernize the hospital's electronics health record is now with the Legislature, according to Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta.

The Marianas Public Land Trust has already approved in principle the $1.5-million loan proposal for the corporation's electronic health record system at the Commonwealth Health Center and Tinian and Rota health clinics. Since it made the decision in November, MPLT has been awaiting the naming of the person who will sign the loan agreement, whether it is the corporation's CEO or Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

Babauta told *Saipan Tribune* that no final decision has been reached between him and the Executive Branch because the issue now lies with the Legislature.

"The MPLT has not approved anything yet [on the project] and they [corporation trustees] just essentially agreed to a figure [that] the Legislature will have to approve in the form of legislation. So the decision is now up to the Legislature," he said.

He said the legislation would address all MPLT concerns on the need for guarantee and assurance of loan repayment.

MPLT earlier said that the release of the loan would depend on the final decision on who between Fitial and Babauta would be the signatory to the loan agreement.

The loan has been assigned a 5-percent interest rate per annum, with payment terms of 18 months. The funds will be used to develop the first stage of the project: procuring new computers, software, and manpower training.

The corporation can avail of over $5 million incentives and bonus from the federal government if it will show meaningful use of the new electronic health record system. The CNMI plans to use this amount to pay off the loan.

This $5 million incentive from the federal government will be doled out in a four-year period: $2 million in the first year, $1.5 million in the second year, $1 million in the third year, and $500,000 in the final year.

Admin to Kilili: Help reduce cost of nat'l food stamp program instead

The Fitial administration labeled Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's food stamp diet as "campaign tactics" and urged him instead to push for legislation that would reduce or eliminate the administrative costs associated with the proposed implementation of a national food stamp program in the CNMI.

Sablan (Ind-MP) said on Thursday he will join thousands eating on $4.87 a day—the maximum food stamp benefit for an individual in the CNMI.

By doing so, Sablan hopes to call attention to how difficult it is buy food with that amount. He will spend just that much on food for each of five days, beginning Jan. 8. Sablan hopes that his action will convince the CNMI government to work with him to get the U.S. Department of Agriculture to include the CNMI in the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said the Fitial administration agrees with the delegate that it's not good enough.

"It won't be good enough so long as leaders focus on petty campaign tactics instead of pushing legislation that would reduce or eliminate the hefty administrative costs hovering over the SNAP program," Demapan said in a statement Thursday.

He also said it won't be good enough "so long as the delegate is not pushing legislation that would reduce the local matching requirement for Medicaid."

"Right now, he touts a $15 million federal share knowing full well that the local budget only provides up to $2 million in available matching funds. The admin feels for families who have to depend on food stamp, but we will not mislead them by shifting blame. Before we commit to such program, we owe it to our people to ensure that we will be capable of taking on additional obligations. Our people deserve both sides of every story, not just the side that sounds nice," Demapan said.

Sablan said he was able to get a 13-percent increase for the CNMI food stamp grant in line with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. That money was locked in with later annual appropriations. This year, he got another $1 million increase from the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

"But it's not good enough," he said, that's why he's asking CNMI government officials to support the idea of joining the national food stamp program which would bring anywhere from $12 million to $24 million in additional money to the CNMI economy. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

ON TAX REFUND SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY ISSUE

Munson: Nothing routine about settlements involving millions of dollars

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Senior District Judge Alex R. Munson issued yesterday an order setting a new date for a settlement conference in businessman John K. Baldwin's $5.6 million federal tax refund lawsuit against the United States.

He also denied the U.S. government's motion to stay the U.S. District Court for the NMI's order for a person with full settlement authority to attend the conference.

Munson set the settlement conference on Feb. 29, 2012, at 9am in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, at the Northern Division of the U.S. District Court of Idaho. He ordered the parties in the lawsuit to have representatives with full settlement authority attend the conference.

"For [the] United States of America, attendance by a person with authority to recommend any settlement reached by the parties to the Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation shall be deemed to comply with this order," Munson said.

The U.S. government is objecting that the district court is requiring it to send a fairly high ranking official to attend a "routine settlement conference."

Munson pointed out, though, that there is nothing routine about settlements involving millions of dollars.

"If this tax refund case were routine—that is, if a more modest amount were in controversy—government regulations would give lower-level officials the authority to settle it and the case would not be in its current posture," the judge said.

The settlement conference in Baldwin's lawsuit was originally set for Oct. 17, 2011, in Idaho before Munson.

On Sept. 9, 2011, Munson denied the U.S. government's emergency motion to excuse the government from the requirement that a person with full settlement authority should attend the settlement conference.

In the Sept. 9 order, Munson said that in 29 years of facilitating settlement negotiations, he has never brought about a settlement agreement without having present on each side a person with full authority to reflect such an agreement.

Under the requirement, the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Tax Division in consultation with the Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation has final settlement authority for a refund of this amount.

The U.S. government twice asked the district court to reconsider. The federal court denied both motions. This prompted the U.S. government to bring the settlement authority issue to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

The U.S. government, through deputy assistant attorney general Tamara W. Ashford, filed an emergency petition asking the Ninth Circuit to order the district court to vacate its orders.

U.S. Department of Justice Tax Division's trial attorney Lauren M. Castaldi asked the district court to allow him and trial counsel for the U.S. Jeremy Hendon to personally appear at the settlement conference, and Deborah Meland, the chief of the Tax Division's Office of Review, will be available by phone.

The appeal prompted Munson on Oct. 7, 2011, to cancel the scheduled Oct. 17 settlement conference.

The Ninth Circuit has yet to rule on the U.S. government's petition. The lawsuit is set for trial on Saipan on May 14, 2012.

In his Thursday's order setting a new date for the settlement conference, Munson said the postponement of the Oct. 17 conference relieved the U.S. government's motion of its emergency nature.

Now that the settlement conference is back on calendar, and the requirement of attendance by representatives with full settlement authority has not abated, the motion to stay is ripe for decision.

Munson reiterated his previous position that in his experience, settlement conferences lead to settlement agreements only when each party is represented by a person with full settlement authority.

"To have a settlement conference without that requirement in place is pointless. The need is especially great when the stakes are as high as they are in this case, where millions of dollars in tax concessions are on the table," Munson said.

The judge said the litigation costs to both parties if negotiations fail and the matter proceeds to trial will be substantial.

"The settlement conference must be given every opportunity to succeed, and that means face-to-face negotiation with persons empowered to effect a settlement," Munson said.

The judge said he has considered the particular circumstances of this case and rejects the U.S. government's suggestion that it would be enough if an official with the authority to make a recommendation is available only by telephone.

"If the claim is large enough to require the official's signoff, it is large enough to require the official's presence at the settlement conference," Munson stressed.

Ex-convict indicted for As Teo shooting

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A federal grand jury has indicted an ex-convict who reportedly assaulted a relative and fired a handgun in As Teo last year.

The indictment charged Justin A. Funkugub with felon in possession of a firearm; possession of a firearm with a removed, altered, or obliterated serial number; and felon in possession of ammunition.

According to the indictment filed Thursday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, Funkugub was caught in possession of a Smith and Wesson .38-caliber revolver on Oct. 11, 2011. The revolver's serial number had been removed, altered, or obliterated—a violation of U.S. Code, according to the indictment filed by assistant U.S. attorney Garth R. Backe.

That same day, Funkugub also allegedly had with him six Winchester Super-X .22 caliber bullets.

The schedule of Funkugub's initial court appearance was not immediately known yesterday.

The suspect has a prior conviction in September 2000 for cattle killing, a crime punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year.

In October 2011, the Office of the Attorney General charged the 35-year-old Funkugub with assault and battery, unlawful possession of a firearm, unlawful possession of ammunition, and disturbing the peace, over the alleged assault of a relative and firing of a handgun.

According to court records, police officers responded to As Teo after receiving a call about someone shooting a gun.

Fund portfolio down to $256.7M

» Administrator: $90M moved to CDARS

MONETH G. DEPOSA

Members of the NMI Retirement Fund discuss Friday the status of the pension program, which is reported to have only $256.7 million as of Dec. 27, 2011. Of the amount, $90 million has already been transferred to CDARS program in an aim to protect the retirees' money while the agency scouts for financial experts to guide them with their investment.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth pension program's portfolio is down to $256.7 million as of Dec. 27—a $4.5-million decline from the $261.2 million recorded on Nov. 30, according to NMI Retirement Fund administrator Richard Villagomez yesterday.

About $90 million of the $256.7 million has already been transferred to the certificate of deposit account registry service, or CDARS program, Villagomez said.

This significant drop in the value of the portfolio is attributed to the continuous drawdown being made by the Fund and the absence of the pension program in the international market as a result of the resignation of its investment consultant.

In October and November 2011 alone, it was reported that drawdown reached $8.4 million, representing four withdrawals of $2.1 million each. Villagomez said the amount is slightly lower than what used to be taken out per withdrawal due to some contributions received from the government and autonomous agencies.

With $90 million of the funds already in CDARS, that leaves $165 million that is still invested in fixed income and $1.5 million that is still being liquidated from former money manager JP Morgan, said board chair Sixto Igisomar. The $1.5 million is still part of the original $20 million investment that the board began liquidating from the money manager since last year.

Igisomar said the board still intends to put all its assets in the CDARS program—as recommended by former investment consultant Wilshire Associates—while the Fund still has no consultant. Pursuant to law, the board cannot invest its assets without an expert's financial advice; moving the assets to CDARS aims to protect the money.

The Fund is still scrambling to find a new financial adviser in the wake of Wilshire Associates' resignation in September last year due to the passage of the Beneficiaries Derivative Act. That law allows retirees to sue on behalf of the Fund if the board refuses to take such action.

Villagomez disclosed that the transition to the CDARS program is being slowed down by the limited capacity of their provider to take large amounts. He said the maximum amount that can be taken by the provider—First Financial—varies every week.

More online courses during NMC's spring 2012 semester

To heighten convenience and flexibility for its students, the Northern Marianas College is offering several online credit courses during the upcoming spring 2012 semester. All students, especially those who reside on Rota and Tinian, are highly encouraged to register for these online classes, which include:

- Small Business Management (Business)
- English Composition (College English)
- Child Development (Education)
- Multicultural Foundations (Education)
- Teaching Methods in Special Education (Education) – Blended Online
- Assessment and Evaluation (Education)
- Educational Technology (Education) – Blended Online
- Disability and Society (Education)
- Intro. To Human Services (Education)
- Writing & Grammar Study III (English Language Institute)
- Personal Health (Health)
- Nutrition and Health (Health)

Online courses offer several advantages: First, students work on assignments at their own convenience, and may even continue a full time job while taking one or a few courses at a time. Second, students have more control of the learning process because they learn at their own pace. Third, the online courses are interactive, which means that students receive feedback from their instructors and even their peers.

Registration for the college's spring 2012 semester begins on Jan. 10, 2012. For more information about the registration process or to apply for admissions, visit www.nmcnet.edu. Financial aid is also still available for those who qualify.

Rota and Tinian residents who are interested in enrolling in any of the online classes are asked to contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 234-5498 Ext. 1537 for more information. ***(NMC)***

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Woman accused of attacking husband out on bail

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho allowed yesterday the temporary release of a 32-year-old woman who allegedly attacked her husband with hot frying pan and burned his shoe.

Camacho modified his previous order that required Carmelita Guiao to post a $5,750 cash bail, allowing her to go free on a $5,750 in unsecured bond.

Camacho released Guiao to a third party custodian and imposed several bail conditions.

The judge said the court should take into account the nature and seriousness of the offense, character, associations, and community ties of the defendant, her bail record, and the strength of the evidence and other factors.

Camacho

Camacho said the government does not consider Guiao a flight risk.

In the government's opposition to bail modification, assistant attorney general Nicole D. Driscoll said that Guiao has not only demonstrated a disregard for the law, but she has shown a blatant disregard for the safety of citizens in the Commonwealth, specifically her own family.

"The defendant stands accused of acts that were unprovoked and very violent, made worse by the fact that they took place in the presence of four of her young children and also disturbed her neighbors," Driscoll said.

Guiao was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, assault, and disturbing the peace.

The victim suffered burn marks on his arms.

Preliminary police investigation showed that the victim had arrived at their house and saw Guiao eating breakfast while their children have not been fed. The victim got upset and decided to cook breakfast for the children.

Guiao then repeatedly hit the husband with a hot frying pan. The victim tried to protect himself with his arms.

Guiao also allegedly set her husband's shoe on fire and tried to flush the shoe down the toilet.

A police officer smelled a strong odor of alcoholic beverages in both Guiao and the victim. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Palacios: Agencies need to be more aggressive in recovering $6.2M

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) expressed disappointment yesterday that government agencies, including the Office of the Attorney General, have not been making any progress collecting at least a portion of $6.2 million in taxpayers' money that were misspent, overpaid to professional service contractors or unpaid land leases dating as far back as 1995 despite repeated reminders from the Office of the Public Auditor.

The freshman lawmaker said there are ways to collect from these entities, including going after the apartments, for example, that these people own.

"These apartments can become CNMI government assets. Another way is to hold their tax rebate and tax refunds, so that they can pay the government back. The government always says we have no money but they act like we don't need money," he added.

Palacios said he tried to introduce a bill that would give OPA prosecutorial authority so that, among other things, OPA will be able to go after entities that owe the government money, for example. But he said such proposal wasn't gaining any support from his colleagues.

"Because of statute of limitation, that recoverable money was drastically reduced from $13 million-plus to only $6.2 million. Sooner or later, it would be zero because the agencies that are supposed to collect are not doing anything or not aggressive enough," he said.

The Department of Labor, for example, has yet to collect from two companies $512,410 in nonresident worker application fees in 2005.

OAG also has yet to recover $392,178 from former members of the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission for their outstanding travel advances in 2002.

The freshman lawmaker said he's considering introducing a bill that would extend the CNMI's statute of limitation, and would look into possible sanctions if agencies continue to ignore their responsibilities.

LANDSLIDE

From Page 1

in a year—20 were killed in a neighboring village last April—and prompted the environment secretary to call for curbing permits in the region's small-scale mining industry.

Initial reports of about 100 missing were based solely on the number of shanties believed hit by the landslide, but many of their residents would have been away on holiday or evacuated hours earlier when the ground started moving, Pantukan town spokesman Arnulfo Lantayan told The Associated Press.

"We are very confident that it will not reach that number," he said.

The municipal disaster office lowered its earlier death toll of 25, as reported by residents and village leaders, to 22, based on the number of bodies recovered, Lantayan said.

It was difficult to determine the number of missing because local authorities have no reliable records of the mostly migrant miners who work in the area with their families, Civil Defense chief Benito Ramos said.

Officials agreed that far fewer than 100 people were missing in the disaster.

The mountainside above Napnapan village collapsed around 3 a.m. Thursday when many residents would have been sleeping, sweeping away about 50 houses, shanties and other makeshift shelters, officials said.

However, many residents already had evacuated around midnight when they observed ground movement near the top of the mountain, Lantayan said. Many others were still visiting home provinces for Christmas holidays, he said.

Army photographs of the disaster show a steep mountainside that looks like it was gouged by a giant shovel. Houses are buried in rubble or lying on their sides while crumpled metal roofs and trees lay nearby.

One tunnel entrance appeared half-covered by rocks and soil. It was not known how many mine shafts have been blocked by debris or whether there were people inside.

A fissure in the mountain discovered last year likely was aggravated by heavy rains and continuous mining in the saturated ground.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje said that authorities had warned residents and local officials last year of the fissure after geologists said it was "highly susceptible" to sudden landslides.

Hundreds of residents near the site of Thursday's slide had been evacuated after last April's landslide less than a mile (about 1 kilometer) away in neighboring Kingking village, Paje said.

But many had returned to the area, officials said.

Paje urged local officials to stop handing out small-scale mining permits, now estimated to number about 3,000 all around the watershed.

LAWS

From Page 1

to run again.

House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), author of the bills that became the tourism incentive law, recognizes the difficulty of coming up with measures that are not only acceptable to most in the Legislature but also would really generate revenues without further hurting businesses and consumers.

Camacho said he's glad that the Legislature passed at least one revenue-generating bill that became public law in a year. "I hope there will be more that will be passed this year," he added.

But ordinary citizens are not amused by lawmakers' inability to pass more than one bill that will generate additional revenues to help the CNMI economy grow.

"I'm so disappointed with these lawmakers," said a 50-year-old Garapan resident yesterday. "For a full year, they said they're going to do something but they have to act fast before we all die."

The mother of four said that lawmakers always blame the economy for most of the problems in the CNMI, "but what have they been doing to help improve it? Any other solution other than casino? Prices keep on going up because there's no price control here."

For over a year now, many lawmakers have been talking about "doing something" for job creation, restoration of 80-hour work biweekly and increased funding for public health, safety, and education.

A review of data from the Legislative Bureau and the Executive Branch shows that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, when he was acting governor, signed 40 public laws in 2011.

Public Laws 17-27 to 17-66 were signed between Jan. 27 and Dec. 20, 2011.

Public laws are different from local laws.

Lawmakers with most bills that became public laws

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) and House floor leader Camacho introduced the most number of bills that became laws in 2011. Each of them had four bills that became law.

Torres said that having the most number of bills signed into law is not the only measure of an effective lawmaker, but said it shows that the measure is important enough to be supported by most members of the Legislature.

Torres, one of the longest serving lawmakers in the CNMI, said there should have been two other revenue-generating laws on the list had the Senate passed last year his House casino bill, along with a bill seeking to legalize marijuana for medicinal use. The House casino bill is still pending in the Senate.

The four bills he introduced became PLs 17-33, 17-34, 17-47 and 17-62. The latter allows the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to borrow up to $10 million from the Rhode Island-based Independence Bank.

Camacho's four bills, meanwhile, became PLs 17-29, 17-46, 17-58, and 17-64.

Besides the tourism incentive program measures, the two other bills were to modernize the NMI Retirement Fund's investment program and clarify the definition of certain taxable commodities.

Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan), and House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) each had three bills that became public laws in 2011.

Santos' bills include two related to waiver of fees on homesteads and public lands, and one that designates a hectare of public land on Rota for the future site of a veterans' cemetery. Santos also had the most number of local bills that became Tinian local laws.

Palacios said anybody can introduce a bill but that doesn't necessarily mean it's a good measure. In the same breath, he said that some good bills don't get passed because members do not want to lose votes in the next elections.

He said he's glad that his colleagues passed three of his bills, two of which amend the sex offenders registration law and increase penalties for those illegally parking in spaces for people with disabilities.

Palacios also pointed out that good laws do not mean a thing if there is no proper and prompt implementation.

Cabrera's three bills include amending the Marianas Visitors Authority board of directors composition to include a non-U.S. citizen appointee, allowing the Department of Public Works to continue hiring foreign engineers until 2015, and providing annuitants an option to continue their CNMI government life insurance coverage under the same group terms and conditions as that offered to government employees but on certain conditions.

Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan), Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan), Rep. Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan), and Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) each had two bills that became public laws in 2011.

One of Reyes' two bills is the NMI Retirement Fund beneficiary derivative lawsuit that both the House and Senate are now seeking to repeal.

Yumul said he's grateful for the House and Senate members from both sides of aisle who supported his bills.

"I always believe that quality versus quantity in legislating is paramount. We can only do this by actively participating in session to deliberate each bill constructively that appears on our legislative agenda no matter who the author may be," he said.

The 11 other lawmakers with one bill each that became public law in 2011 were former representative Diego Benavente, for the shark fin ban measure or PL 17-27; Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan); Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan); Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota); House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan); Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan); Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan); Rep. Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan); Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian); Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), for the fiscal year 2012 budget measure; and Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian).

Among the seven who didn't have bills that became law in 2011 were Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Janet Maratita (Ind-Saipan), Rep. Trenton Conner (R-Tinian), House minority leader Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), Rep. Tony Sablan (R-Saipan), Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), and Sen. Henry San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian).

Some of them, including Manglona, however, co-sponsored some bills that were enacted. Conner, meanwhile, had the most number of Tinian bills that became local laws.

Tenorio, in an interview, said his bills were blocked by the Senate, including the controversial revenue-generating measure that legalizes casino gambling on Saipan.

"I don't care whether any of my bills would pass. Remember that the Senate is blocking all of my bills. If they see it's from me, they block it. But even House members are not acting on my bills, including the important bills on labor, the repeal of the qualifying certificate program and the reduction in rebate. The last two are revenue-generating bills," he said.

Tenorio, a former governor and former speaker, said "the less we legislate, the better," referring to bills that result in additional expense for the government that are not necessarily for basic services such as public health, safety, and education.

He also said even members of the U.S. Congress that later became presidents or served as lawmakers for decades had zero or only a few bills that became laws.

Tenorio said when he was speaker, his job was to get other lawmakers' important bills go through.

Nomination for 2012 ESGR Freedom Award nears deadline

» Guard, Reserve members urged to nominate supportive employers

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency, is accepting nominations for the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

The Freedom Award is the DoD's highest award for civilian employers supporting Guard and Reserve members.

All Guard and Reserve members are encouraged to nominate employers who have provided exceptional support of their military service. Nominations may be submitted by service members at www.FreedomAward.mil until Jan. 16, 2012.

"Even as our nation scales down our combat missions abroad, Guard and Reserve members and their employers remain a critical component in our national security equation," said James Rebholz, ESGR national chair. "Just as our country has heavily relied on the more than one million men and women of the Guard and Reserve, these service members have counted on their employers for support and encouragement. I encourage all Guardsmen and Reservists to nominate their supportive employers today, so our Nation may acknowledge their extraordinary efforts."

Last year, there were 19 nominations in Guam and the CNMI. Three local employers—Galaide Group, LLC, Hilton Guam Resort and Spa and the CNMI Public School System—were named semifinalists, or Top 148 of the over 4,049 nominations nationwide. Although they didn't win the coveted Freedom Award, their placement speaks volumes about employers in the Marianas region.

So far in 2012, there have been 18 nominations submitted: 14 for Guam and four for CNMI employers. They are:

- ASC Trust Corp.
- CNMI PSS-Oleai Elementary
- CNMI Public School System
- GDOE – Agueda Johnston MS
- GDOE – MU Lujan Elementary
- GDOE – Oceanview MS
- Guam Marriott Resort & Spa
- Guam Power Authority
- Home Depot Guam
- Hollywood Theatres Saipan
- Joeten Enterprises, Inc.
- Naval Hospital Guam
- Port Authority of Guam
- St. Joseph's Medical Transport
- Security Title, Inc.
- Tropical Beach House Guam (2)
- Transportation Security Administration

The Top 15 employers of 2012 will be announced by early summer and honored in Washington, D.C. during a special ceremony in September.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award, visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Capt. Josephine Blas at 671-735-0456 at the ESGR Guam-CNMI Office.

Paramount to ESGR's mission is encouraging employment of Guardsmen and Reservists who bring integrity, global perspective and proven leadership to the civilian workforce. ***(ESGR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Jury cancellation

This is to inform all prospective jurors for panels "DS" that the jury selections scheduled for Monday, Jan. 9, 2012, at 8:30am in Courtrooms 223A has been cancelled until further notice. For more information contact Dora SN. Decena, jury coordinator, or Kristy Diaz, deputy clerk, at telephone no. 236-9765. ***(PR)***

Air Force training on Farallon de Medinilla

Santa Rita, Guam—The Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on the following dates and times:

- Jan. 9 and 11, from 9am to 4pm
- Jan. 13, from 8am to 3pm

The public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. ***(USN)***

CCA board to meet on Monday

The Commonwealth Cancer Association's board of directors will be convening its monthly meeting on Monday, Jan. 9, 2012, at 12pm at the CCA Conference room in Gualo Rai. The agenda includes updates on Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, the board's annual general membership meeting, MMAC 2012, and CCA's program manager transition. Under New Business, the board is expected to approve CCA's proposed budget for 2012, as well as reviewing CCA's standard operating procedures. All board meetings are open to the public. For more information contact the Commonwealth Cancer Association at 682-0050 or email cca@ccamarianas.org. ***(PR)***

Kona farmers want more coffee labeling details

HONOLULU (AP)—Kona coffee growers want Hawaii's labeling law modified to provide more details on packages of coffee blends that contain Hawaii-grown beans.

Currently, coffee blends sold in the state that contain Hawaii-grown coffee must disclose what percentage is grown in the islands, and it must be at least 10 percent. The Kona Coffee Farmers Association said Thursday that it wants the state Legislature to consider a bill it has drafted that would also identify where the remainder of the blend is grown.

If the association is successful an example of a package label would read, "90 percent Panamanian coffee, 10 percent Kona coffee."

The state senator from Kona said Thursday he plans to introduce the bill at the end of the month. "I respect the local community and Kona coffee is a big issue for us," state Sen. Josh Green, D-Mililii-Waimea, said.

For the farmers, it's about truth-in-labeling and protecting the integrity of a world-famous Hawaii product. Hawaii is the only place in the United States where coffee is grown. Coffee aficionados pay a premium for coffee grown in farms in the Kona district, known for its rich volcanic soil and tropical climate.

"The state of Hawaii needs to be with the Kona coffee farmers," said Colehour Bondera, the association's president. "We're the most lucrative agricultural commodity in the state."

A pound of pure Kona coffee can sell for about $25—more if it's organic.

Not giving consumers all the information about where coffee is grown dilutes the perception of Kona's quality, Bondera said.

But modifying the law would just be a small step for the farmers, he said. Several years ago there was a failed effort to increase the minimum percentage of Hawaii-grown coffee in blends to at least 75 percent. The farmers would prefer only blends that are mostly Kona bear that name.

"The name Kona should not be used on any products that's not mostly Kona," he said. "When people talk about wines, you can't a buy a Napa wine when it's only 10 percent Napa."

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99 Cents, Asin Fish Market, Best Seller, Capital Hill Market, Capricciosa, CHC Gift Shop, Ebisuya, Garapan Market, EZ Mart, Gold Ribbon, Grace Market, Han Nam, Happy Market (As Lito & Garapan), Himawari, I-Mart, Jin Market, Joeten (Dandan, Garapan, Kagman & Susupe), Joeten Kiyu Library, Kagman Market, Martha's Store, Mobil (Chalan Piao, Chalan Kiya, Kagman, Middle Road & Susupe), Payless Supermarket, San Antonio Supermarket, San Jose Market, San Roque Market, Sara Market, Shell (Airport, Dandan, Gualo Rai, Highway Express, Koblerville, Puerto Rico, San Roque & Susupe), Shirley's Coffee Shop (Garapan & Susupe), Super Fresh Market, Tony Roma's, Twins Supermaket (Dandan & Puerto Rico), and New XO Market.

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Iowa didn't settle anything

Don't be fooled by the swagger in Mitt Romney's walk at the conclusion of Iowa's caucuses to choose a Republican presidential nominee.

His eight-vote victory over Rick Santorum may have winnowed the field, but it hardly clears up who will be the eventual nominee to face President Obama. In fact, the outcome may be murkier.

Three-quarters of caucus participants Tuesday night chose someone other than Romney, and his 24 percent tally was almost identical to what he received four years ago, when he finished second to caucus winner Mike Huckabee.

Romney is very unlikely to mirror Huckabee and lose the next scheduled contest, Tuesday's New Hampshire primary. Recent polling shows Romney has a big lead in the Granite State, which sits next door to Massachusetts, where he was the governor.

But Santorum's unexpected surge in Iowa should help him cut Romney's advantage in New Hampshire, even if he doesn't win there. And he will be helped by the third- and fourth-place Iowa finishers, Ron Paul and Newt Gingrich, respectively, who will also be campaigning hard.

If Romney wins New Hampshire, but by a significantly smaller margin than anticipated, the South Carolina primary on Jan. 28 could pose significant danger for him. Social conservatives in the Southern state may match their peers in Iowa in supporting abortion opponent Santorum.

Michele Bachmann's sixth-place finish in Iowa, where only five months ago she won the GOP straw poll, led her to drop out of the race Wednesday. She joins another former front-runner, Herman Cain. A discouraged Rick Perry, who finished fifth Tuesday night, canceled campaign appearances and headed home to Texas to reassess the situation.

The Iowa caucuses typically force candidates from the field, but rarely decide the eventual party nominees. Largely, the caucuses have become a contrivance that brings unwarranted media attention and huge sums of money into a state whose fairly homogeneous population is hardly a microcosm of the nation's electorate.

Post-Iowa, the Republican Party is no closer to resolving its internal struggle to define itself. In fact, far-right GOP strategist Richard Viguerie said Romney's slim victory shows "how narrow and shallow his support is," which may mean the nomination won't be settled until the convention in August in Tampa.

Other Republicans believe the party will ultimately unite behind Romney as the best hope to unseat Obama. But for that to happen, the party's conservative wing will have to bite its tongue and accept a moderate with stances that don't always conform to its own. Many conservatives say they did that with John McCain as the nominee in 2008. Are they willing to do it again?

Iowa didn't answer that question. Next up, New Hampshire.

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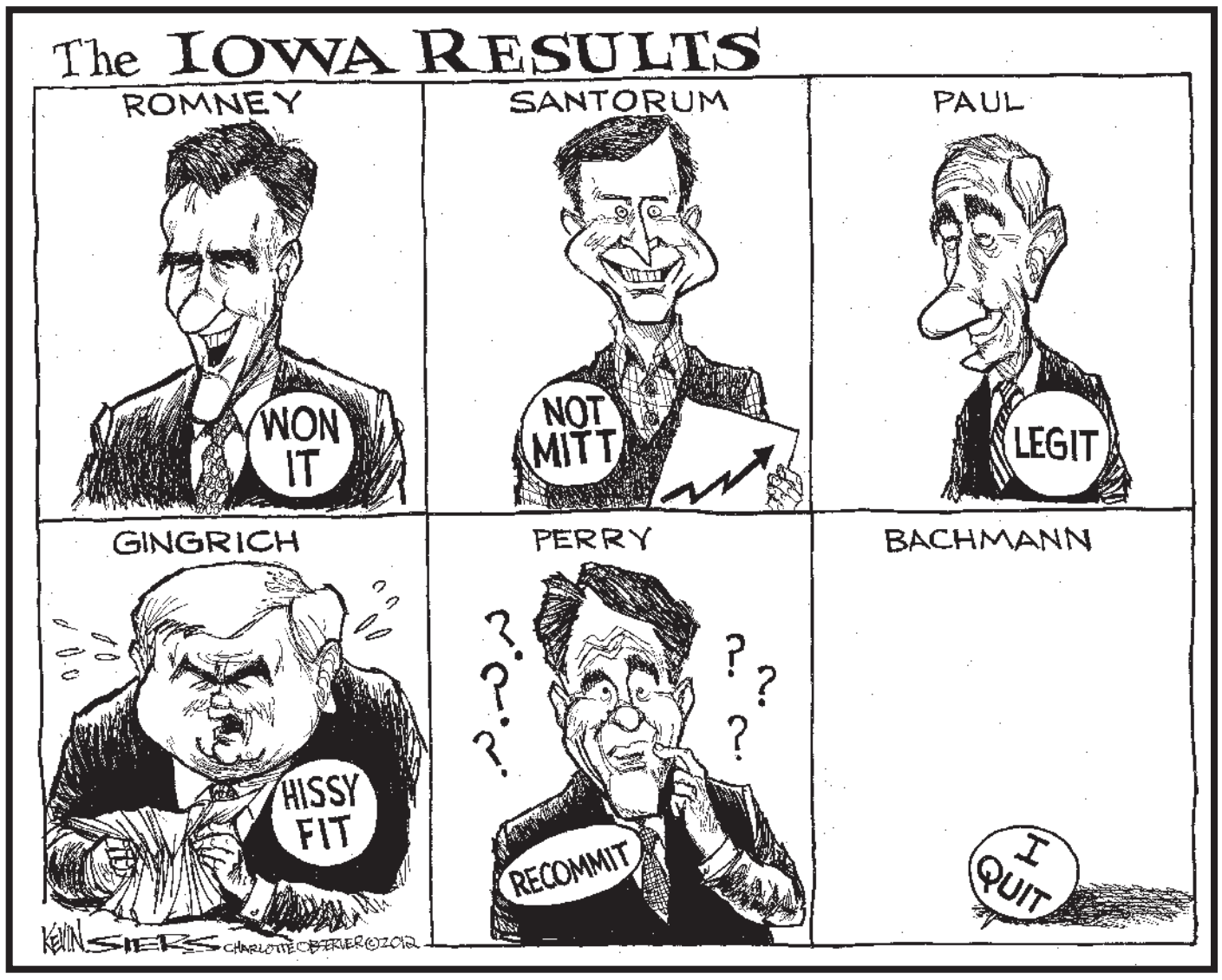

GOD and the GOP

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

U.S. Republicans have long ago identified GOD on their side against the godless socialist Democrats. That was not always the case. The Young Republicans were irreverent reformers at my university. They did make it clear that my preference for Elvis Presley over Pat Boone, the Beatles over The Who, was too much.

Southern Democrats of the '60s welcomed me to their homes if I identified myself as a pagan saved by the blood of Christ. Hosts brought out souvenir chopsticks from the Pacific war when we ate, assuming that all Asians knew how to use them. I was introduced like a trophy earned in a safari to friends. When a relation showed romantic interest and we responded in kind, I was not invited back.

Nixon allowed southern Democrats to take over the GOP, and Abramoff later exploited their hubris. GOD in the GOP reportedly found home!

Urbane Michigan's Mitt Romney went south in the Iowa primary just so he can say he is mainstream at the core of the Republican dream. Minnesota's Michelle Bachmann withdrew from the presidential campaign, but is determined to derail Obama's second term because "he has got us on the slippery slope of godless socialism."

A colleague visiting relations over the holiday was at an inn where Rick Santorum was in Ioway poli-nitpicking. Santorum and the rest of the GOP lineup mouthed things against established order and even libertarian Ron Paul said things that an Occupy person may appreciate, but when Santorum got sanctimoniously homophobic to a receptive audience, my friend hollered: "Now I understand what a Negro felt listening to George Wallace of Alabama."

Comes Pat Robertson, former GOP contender vs. VP George H. W. Bush, in touch with God over breakfast. To young 'uns unfamiliar with Pat, he is a former U.S. senator's son who passed out collection plates more successfully than passing the state bar. Three medals in Korea were allegedly earned for assuring that the officers' clubs were sufficiently liquored! Pat is, however, not the news; GOD is, and s/he has a following to show for it. GOD is not in favor of Obama's policies and would not mind having Barack move out of the White House. Another term will doom the nation!

Not to trivialize God, but we follow the Levantine method of designating the "mystery of mysteries in life" as G-O-D, or the Islamic G-*-d. For evangelical usage, one peruses the paper Pope, preferably the King James version, or any of its pedigrees. Roman Catholics listen to ex-cathedra pronouncements of learned men, from the Patristics to Augustine and Aquinas through Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, better known for his *God and the World,* but now enthroned Pope Benedict XVI in Peter's Vatican chair.

GOD of the Christian Right joined the Republicans! They resent Obama's diminishing the Supreme Being's power at the White House annual Prayer Breakfast. His holiday card does not include Christmas greetings but is suspected of saying *Salaam Malaikum* under his breath, or uttering it in his dreams. Why, he has not even invited Billy or Franklin Graham to Amen his breakfast table!

Mormon Mitt barely topped Iowa, indicative of voters' uncertainty of the Joseph Smith & Brigham Young progeny in the God-department. He might even mitigate the Muslim label leveled on Obama. Santorum on the other hand, to pare the budget, will not pay for birth-control pills!

Of course, there has been some radical paradigm shifting in the God-department after World War II. Fr. Pedro Arrupe, a physiology-trained padre tempered in the days of Franco's fascism, miraculously surviving Hiroshima of '45 August in the blast zone, led Loyola's disciplined Order into practices of mercy and missions of justice, resulting in Liberation Theology that rent the Roman tradition, with Catholics in the Americas opting for a preferential treatment of the poor as the mission of the Christian faith, and the Opus Dei ensuring that the Alpine Swiss properly guard the opulent Basilica.

The German theologian and Christian disciple Dietrich Bonhoeffer chose not only to resist the Nazis but helped plan the Fuhrer's assassination. For the failed attempt, he paid dearly with his life. But the martyred Lutheran found favor in the ethically sensitive children of the Reformation, promoting a religionless Christianity in the world of spirit, and a contentless Christ in the reality of life's grace.

The death-of-GOD occurred, along with the old-man-in-the-sky image of the Father, banishing the Clark Kent-Superman Jesus idolatry as Son, and celebrating the liberation of existence and freedom's essence as the embodiment of the Holy Spirit. The triune perspectives of transcendence, immanence, and transparency converged in a refreshing wind of emancipation that now sweeps the colonial and corporate corpse of globalization. Humanity stands at the threshold of a radical choice, between the caloried consumerism of the commercialized psyche, and the reality of lean body and soul in full authenticity.

So the GOP can keep GOD. My daughter reports that George O'Donnell is not registered to vote in her precinct, nor has Godofredo Ortega Damaso been seen in mine. From a very reliable source, GOD is not known to be a fingerprinted voter!

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Celebrating the real Joan of Arc

By NANCY GOLDSTONE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

People around the world came together yesterday, Jan. 6, to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the birth of St. Joan of Arc, the brave peasant girl from the French countryside who in 1429 lifted the English siege of Orleans, walloped the enemy army and led her king to be crowned at Reims.

And how typical of the magic of Joan's story that she should have been born on so important a Christian holiday, the Feast of the Epiphany, celebrating Christ's baptism and the coming of the Magi. Just another wonder in the life of the transcendent young woman who heard the voices of angels and presented the dauphin of France with a secret sign that only he would know, a sign that convinced him of her authenticity as a messenger from God.

Except that, like so much of the irresistible mystery surrounding Joan, this date, accepted by so many for so long as fact, was almost certainly created six centuries ago as a deliberate fiction for political purposes.

That neither Joan's date of birth nor her baptism was ever recorded is not in historical dispute. Indeed, Joan herself did not know when she was born. "As far as I know, (I am) about 19 years old," she testified to her inquisitors at her Trial of Condemnation in January 1431. There was nothing unusual in this. People in the 15th century did not celebrate individual birthdays, and there was certainly no need to record so mundane an event for a member of the lower classes, and a female to boot. Instead, the general populace celebrated saints' days.

Ironically, if Joan had been delivered on the Feast of the Epiphany, there would have been a chance that her family would have remembered the occasion and that she would have grown up with this knowledge. Nothing would have made Joan happier than to have been born on an important religious holiday. She would have jumped at the chance to fling this information in her inquisitors' faces had it been true. As she did not do so, the Feast of the Epiphany is actually one of the few dates of the year that can be reasonably ruled out as the date of her birth.

The source for the Jan. 6 date was a French aristocrat by the name of Perceval de Boulainvilliers. Perceval was a member of the royal court who fancied himself a poet. He had not known of Joan's existence until she showed up unannounced in Chinon and begged to see the dauphin. What he did know was that she had ended the siege of Orléans in a week and that this victory, the first sign of life in years in the dauphin's otherwise moribund campaign against the English, could be used to coax allies into the French camp.

The dauphin desperately needed troops, money, supplies and political support, so to help his sovereign, Perceval wrote a letter to the wealthy duke of Milan that took the nature of a sales pitch. It was Perceval who, taking poetic license, fabricated the date of Joan's birth. He imbued not only this event but her entire childhood with picturesque details—for example, he claimed that as a girl, Joan never lost a single sheep, which was probably true, as the family kept cattle—intended to surround his subject with an otherworldly aura of mysticism. Over time, this date, like so much of the legend deliberately fashioned around Joan, was accepted as historical fact.

Which is a shame because of all the stories in the world, Joan's is one of the least in need of embellishment. She should not be remembered because she showed the dauphin some trinket, or was an illegitimate member of the French royal family, or revealed secrets that no one else knew (all of which are, like the Jan. 6 date, almost certainly mythological). What makes Joan an iconic figure, as inspirational today as she was six centuries ago, was her faith, her unswerving dedication to her cause and, above all, her astounding bravery. It was this bravery that was demonstrated at her very first battle when, as the wounded French soldiers, bloodied and disheartened, streamed back to the safety of the walls of Orleans, 17-year-old Joan rushed out into the crush of arrows and swords to give battle.

Those of us who lived through 9/11, and who remember the members of the New York City Fire Department and other rescue squads charging up the staircases of the towers as everyone else fled down, will recognize this particular brand of courage.

That is why the story of Joan of Arc resonates, why people all over the world are still drawn to her, and why her memory, if not her birthday, deserves to be celebrated on Jan. 6.

Nancy Goldstone's latest book, The Maid and the Queen: The Secret History of Joan of Arc*, will be published in April. She wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times*.*

New Year's resolution: No major overhauls

By GINA BARRECA
THE HARTFORD COURANT

I've been making the same New Year's resolutions since I was 11: be nicer, get organized and lose weight. And although I still have friends who speak to me, can easily locate 1,392 pencils in my office without searching and am not yet being hauled around by a winch, I haven't exactly exceeded my expectations.

In the spirit of new beginnings, and yet aware that, if certain fringe groups are correct, the world will end before I pay off my 2011 Visa bills, I'd like to propose a new vision for New Year's resolutions: Resolve to keep doing precisely what you're doing.

Doesn't that immediately lower your heart rate, improve your breathing and permit you to unclench those pretty fists?

The only way you'll need to tweak your life is to do the really rotten stuff slightly less often and with less enthusiasm. This way, as long as you're the kind of promise keeper who can get up there and shout to the world, "I will attempt not to get significantly, disastrously, monstrously worse!" you actually have a shot at achieving your goals.

In terms of niceness, you should start with small resolutions, such as, "I promise not to spend as much of my time trying to guess other women's weight and dress sizes as if they were livestock and I were at a state fair trying to win a prize." This daily practice of niceness would help you become far less likely to comment, "Lois! Three months pregnant or going heavy on the gravy?" when you meet acquaintances.

In terms of getting organized, you could concede that closets are not for storing things, but for hiding things. Just ask your gay friends: The expression "coming out of the closet" did not originate from the idea that people with same-sex preference were tidy, but that they were invisible. Stop attempting to group together items by color, size or expiration date. Admit that, for reasons not even your therapist could explain, you can't bear to throw away the souvenir shot glass you bought in Niagara Falls. Shove it on the back shelf and put something bulky in front of it. Can't find it? Good for you!

In terms of losing weight, just give up. Stop torturing yourself already. If you're over 35, nobody is looking at you anyhow. Face it: everybody is looking at beautiful 20-year-olds, male and female. They're like gazelles on an "Animal Planet" documentary. They run, lithe and light-footed, across the boundless territory just the way you once did, until they mate, whereupon they become part of a pack. Then the males gather at the watering hole and the females try to guess each other's weight.

Reassure yourself by repeating this mantra, "Retaining water only matters if you are a boat." (Not built like a boat, but an actual boat). If you spend time scanning your body for flaws the way a proofreader scans a legal document for errors, just stop.

If you are the kind of person who has ever said to anyone, "Does this barrette make my head look fat?" resist the urge to reveal your innermost thoughts at that particular moment.

It's taken 60 years of the women's movement to get us to where we can work at our own jobs, earn our own money and exert sufficient financial independence—even at 71 cents earned to every man's dollar—to purchase that hair accessory without asking someone's permission. To wield it as an implement of whining self-sabotage would make a suffragette weep. Either that or she'd put your eye out with it; they were tough broads.

Look, we all know that what keeps us from getting what we want in life is the story we tell ourselves about why we can't have it. So let's make 2012 a year of new stories. Tell yourself that you can get better by not getting worse. And tell yourself how you can start. This is far easier, and will be more rewarding by year's end, than expecting to live each day off of 400 calories, or $11 dollars, or only kind words. Because there's no worse way to begin a new year than to fail within its first 24 hours. For luck, stay away from women wielding barrettes.

Gina Barreca is an English professor at the University of Connecticut, a feminist scholar who has written eight books, and a columnist for the Hartford Courant*. She can be reached through her website at http://www.ginabarreca.com.*

In 2012, thanks and challenges

By PETER GOLDMARK
NEWSDAY

At the turn of the year many of us pause to reflect on where we've been and where we need to go. I want to thank some who moved us forward this past year, and challenge others to help us move forward in 2012.

Thanks to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen—the three women who accepted the Nobel Peace Prize for their leadership of nonviolent movements for peace and human rights. These women fought against war, violence and oppression, without compromise and at great personal risk. Those three women were in the news. The following thanks go to one who wasn't: Margaret McKenna.

Four years ago, Wal-Mart Stores Inc.—the country's biggest grocery chain—was giving away how much food to the hungry? Answer: none.

Today it gives away more food than all the other big grocery chains combined. Some food banks had no trucks to collect and deliver the food—Wal-Mart bought them trucks. As the cruel vise of economic slowdown and unemployment tightened, some of those who had been volunteering in local food banks lost their day jobs and became clients where they had been helping out. The timing for Wal-Mart's act of generosity was providential. McKenna led the team at the Walmart Foundation that did all this.

And now the challenges for 2012:

1. President Barack Obama: Give us a road map bold enough to get out of the economic swamp we're in. You see yourself as a bridge-builder; well tell us the big plan to get to the other side looks like. No more small bridges to nowhere that don't span the gap.

2. Xi Jinping: As you assume leadership of the largest country on Earth, tell us you will put China on the road to a sustainable future for itself, and thus a sustainable planet for all of us. Face the need for limits on carbon emissions, for ending the mad orgy of coal-plant construction, and for careful water planning—in partnership with neighbors Vietnam, Cambodia and others whose futures depend on your actions.

3. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y.: After all these years of running and amassing huge campaign war chests, lead us in the effort to get the poison of greed-driven money out of our politics. We are suffocating in a system where the rich use money to exercise disproportionate political influence. You have the authority, the wits and the power base to help us find a way out of this craziness before we leave your daughters and mine a republic that is rotten at the core.

4. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.: At this moment of drift and despair there is a role for a thoughtful conservative who understands what it will take to reverse the downward economic spiral in which we're caught. Why don't you try the Churchillian role on for size? Speak truth in the midst of confusion; describe the path we need to take when no one else dares to. You may find that millions are ready to listen to you.

5. Bill Moyers: You have served as pastor, White House aide, reporter, editor and TV host. Yours is the strongest, truest voice of our generation. Give us two sermons a year on where we are, where we need to go, and the values we need to cleave to in order to get there. Write and record those sermons—the rest of us will spread them everywhere virally.

6. Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo: As governor, you've pulled the state back from the brink of financial disaster. It's time now for a bold capital investment program that will move New York to the front of the pack in jobs and growth. (That $1 billion you announced as part of the tax agreement counts only as a small down payment.)

In trouble or not, we Americans have more to be thankful for than most. Let us act on that, thoughtfully and generously.

Peter Goldmark, a former publisher of the International Herald Tribune*, headed the climate program at the Environmental Defense Fund. He wrote this for* Newsday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼77°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

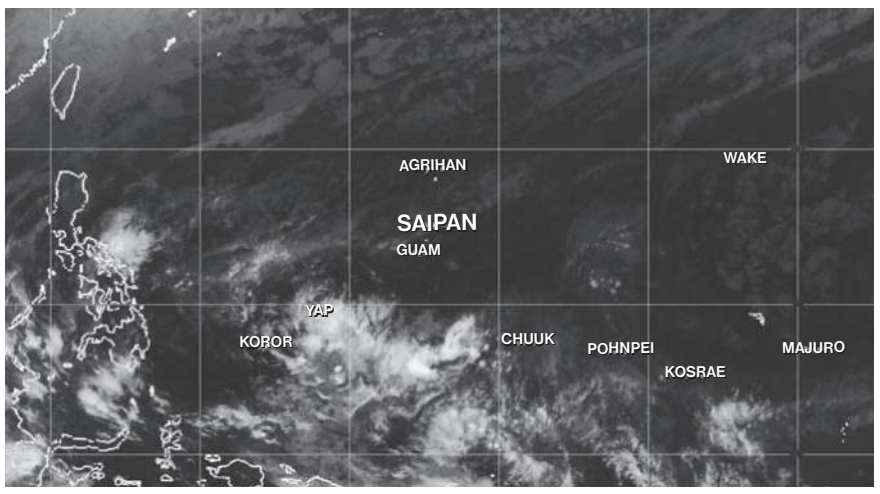
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲84	▼77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Yap	Showers	▲87	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲86	▼80
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼78
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲84	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲69	▼63
Beijing	Sunny	▲36	▼16
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼61
Honolulu	Sunny	▲80	▼69
London	Showers	▲52	▼43
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲64	▼45
Manila	Cloudy	▲83	▼75
Melbourne	Showers	▲79	▼64
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲77	▼55
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲51	▼32
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲46	▼35
Paris	Showers	▲51	▼41
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼31
Rome	Sunny	▲56	▼40
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲47	▼33
San Francisco	Sunny	▲65	▼44
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲32	▼19
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼33
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲57	▼35

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from east of Minami Tori Shima at 25N159E to north of Agrihan in the CNMI at 20N145E then continues as a shear line to beyond 130E at 14N. Clouds and scattered showers are occurring along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary. An old shear line stretches southwestward from south of Minami Tori Shima at 20N155E to Anatahan at 16N146E to finally end north of Koror at 11N133E. Cloudiness and widely scattered showers are present along and up to 170 miles northwest of this feature. A near-equatorial trough runs east-southeastward from near Mindanao to 3N130E to finally end at EQ150E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are seen southwest of Chuuk near the southeastern end of the trough or south of a line from 1N145E to 5N150E. A surface trough reaches northwestward from 3N145E to 9N142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found near the trough axis or southeast of Yap within 175 miles of a line from 3N139E to 8N143E. Scattered showers are present farther east over Chuuk within 100 miles of a line from 6N145E to 8N153E. Trade-wind convergence is creating scattered showers over a large area. This area curves southeastward from southwest of Wake Island to near Kosrae to Butaritari atoll and finally to the date line southeast of Majuro. This area lies within 125 miles of a line from 16N160E to 8N161E to 3N170E to 4N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:25 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
7:34 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
12:36 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
5:32 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Monday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:13 PM	4:40 AM
Sunday	5:07 PM	5:31 AM
Monday	6:02 PM	6:21 AM
Tuesday	6:58 PM	7:10 AM
Wednesday	7:53 PM	7:56 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05070	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:35am	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/179	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English
Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro
Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro
Parish office hours:
Monday-Saturday
8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm)
Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated)
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass
Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am/ 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.
Telephone no. 285-0273

Santa Soledad Mission Parish
Monday: 6pm
Tuesday: 6pm
Wednesday: 6pm
Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass)
Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass)
Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am,
Saturday: 4-6pm
Telephone no. 256-4568

Saint Jude Parish
Monday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 7am
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm
Office is close every Thursday and Saturday
Telephone no. 288-0007

San Antonio Parish
Monday-Friday 6pm
Saturday: 6pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children)
Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm
Close on Sunday and Monday

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English
Monday and Tuesday:6am Chamorro
Wednesday:6pm English
Thursday: 6am Chamorro
Friday: 6am English
Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog
Sunday: anticipated mass

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am
Monday-Friday: 7pm
Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Monday- Saturday: 6am daily mass
Monday- Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass
Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm
Thursday: day off
Friday- Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm
Telephone no. 234-6991

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English
Monday: 6pm English
Tuesday: 6pm English
Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil
Thursday: 6pm English
Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays)
Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass
Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm
Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143

San Vicente Parish
Monday-Friday: 6pm,
Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month)
Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm
Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm
Parish office hours: daily 9-11am
Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 8am
Monday: 6pm (1st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm)
Tuesday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm
Parish office hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30am-12pm

PROTESTANT

Amen Church
Sunday : 10am, 1pm, 5pm Wednesday : 7pm Friday Prayer : 9pm Bible Study : 4pm (Tue) Music Practice : 5pm (Sat) Korean class: 3:30pm (Thu) Visitation : 10am(Fri, Sat) Outreach : 8am (First Sat) Tel. No. 285-2121, 256-2221 Email : oseyo@daum.net

Born Again Christian
(Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm
Telephone no. 234-6026/27

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services:
Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm
Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm
Telephone no. 235-8540

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am
Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm
Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm
Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm
Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm
As Perdido Road
Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No. (670) 235-8590
Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Garapan, Plumeria Road,
Call 285-6081 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am
Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service)
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio
Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week)
Telephone no. 322-5680

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (English)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church
Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa
(east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral)
Worship Service: 9:00am
Children's Sunday School: 9:00am
Choir Practice: 8:00am
Singspiration: 8:30am
Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm
Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158

Immanuel Methodist Church
(Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)
(Korean Congregation)
Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm
Wednesday evening service: 8pm
Daily morning prayer: 5am

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am,
Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm,
Wednesday: 7:30-9pm

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9:20am
Sunday Adult: 11am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service: 10 am at Seventh Day Adventist church on Quartermaster Rd.
Wednesday Service: 7 pm at Fina Sisu Housing FS#1
Contact Nick for more info: 287-1661

Marianas Bible Fellowship Center
Sunday School: 9-9:30am
Divine Worship: 9:30-11am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)
Sunday worship 8:30am
Sunday evening 7:00pm
Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm
San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel
Telephone: 789-7566

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 10-11am
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm
Thursday Bible Study: 7pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church Koblerville
Sunday services:
Sunday school 9:00am
Morning worship 10:00am
Evening service 6:00pm
Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm

Chinese services
Sunday morning 10:00am
Sunday evening 7:00pm

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church.
Telephone No: 285-4661/2

Thy Word Ministries Saipan
Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service
located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi

Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian
Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Victorious Christian Church
(Formerly God's Victorious Army)
Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service
Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship
Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup
Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service
Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting
Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice
Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting
Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246

Editor's Note: Information subject to change without prior notice. All information provided by the respective churches. If you want your church or religious activities included or to report changes and errors, call *Saipan Tribune* at 235-6397 or 235-2440 or email editor@saipantribune.com.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 7, 1999

Govt imposes 13.4-pct. cut for Q2
To deal with the projected decline in revenue collections, the financially-troubled government has begun implementing a 13.4 percent cut in the second quarter allotment to departments and agencies, but lowered the budget slash for the Public School System to help it cope with the growing needs of the education sector. While the rest of the agencies received a uniform reduction in the quarterly advise, allocation for PSS was chopped by 9 percent to avert a potential disruption in its operations. The reduced spending level for each department and agency took effect beginning January in line with the revised revenue estimates for Fiscal Year 1999. In the past, all government offices received 25 percent of their total budget every quarter.

Legislature ready to adopt master plan
Legislators are expected to pass a proposed bill to set into motion the recently drafted master plan of various Capital Improvement Projects on the island seen as its only hope to recover from the worsening economic crisis. Members of the Senate yesterday met with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio and other administration officials to discuss the mechanism on how to utilize some $154 million in funds guaranteed under the Covenant Agreement. Senate Vice President Thomas P. Villagomez said they are ready to support the proposal which will identify local funds to match the federal assistance on Section 702 projects. "I believe we will be working at the $64 million bracket for now," he told in an interview after emerging from the two-hour informal meeting at the Hafa Adai Beach Hotel.

Jan. 7, 2002

Rota youths tackle social problems
Teen pregnancy. Drugs. Violence. Ineffective education. These may seem like a laundry list of issues that children should stay away from but the youths on Rota got down and dirty last Friday in a free-wheeling session with members of the 4th Youth Congress. Talking about issues that mattered to them and problems that confront them everyday, a sizable number of Rota High School students vented it all out in a forum with eight senators of the 4th Youth Congress, as a means to guide the senators in crafting legislation that would benefit the CNMI's youths.

DOLI lifts hiring ban on local firm
A company may now employ nonresident workers again, after the Department of Labor and Immigration found out that it has fully satisfied its obligations in connection with a labor case decision almost two years ago. In an administrative order, hearing officer Vicente C. Seman lifted the ban on Arirang Enterprises, Inc. to hire nonresident workers in the Commonwealth, one of the penalties it suffered in an earlier administrative order on a labor case filed by seven Chinese workers. In the earlier order, the company was ordered to pay the complainants back wages, and was sanctioned a monetary fine of $3,500.

Jan. 7, 2003

EPA beefs up hazardous waste collection efforts
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials are reminding residents of the two-day collection of household hazardous waste. The U.S. EPA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Guam Environmental Protection Agency are jointly sponsoring the collection. The collection will take place on Saturday, Jan. 11, and on Sunday, Jan. 12, from 8am to 4pm at the typhoon debris transition stations in Dededo (next to the Guam Sports Complex along Harmon Loop Road), Tiyan (east side past the Department of Motor Vehicles building), and Malojloj (close to the Mayor's Office).

NMI acquires consulting services
The Commonwealth recently acquired the consulting services of two U.S. mainland-based firms, which are envisioned to help protect the Northern Marianas from decisions springing from the nation's capital that may adversely impact the islands' interests. Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio, in an interview yesterday, said the CNMI has contracted the expertise of the National Group, LLP and the Palmetto Group. Both have reportedly been effective in pushing for the CNMI's agenda in Washington. "We're lucky that we have them at a very, very nominal and reasonable contract cost and they have been effective in ensuring that actions against the CNMI on federalization of the minimum wage and labor and immigration matters are not pushed through in the U.S. Congress," said Tenorio.

Maharlika

UFO helps Kagman High student with $500 donation

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The United Filipino Organization has chipped in $500 that will go toward the $5,000 that a Kagman High School sophomore needs to participate in the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine in New York this summer.

Bong Malasarte, president of the umbrella organization of some 30 groups in the CNMI, presented UFO's $500 donation to 15-year old Jace Pineda during the group's Christmas party at the Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel on Dec. 17.

Proud parents Elmer and Tess Pineda, along with youngest daughter Jessica, accompanied Jace Pineda during last month's check presentation.

The second of three siblings born to Filipino parents, Jace Pineda was selected by NYFL to take part in its medicine program, which introduces outstanding high school students to the world of medicine, familiarizing students with the various professions available in the medical field.

Jace Pineda, who dreams of becoming a pediatrician, was chosen for her academic excellence, leadership potential, and interest in a career in medicine. She graduated salutatorian at Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School and valedictorian at Hopwood Jr. High School.

Malasarte said that Pineda sought their help to raise the over $5,000 she needs to pay for her round-trip ticket, tuition fee for the forum, and accommodations.

"She is an intelligent student and she deserves it. I know this forum would really help her get an even brighter future. I hope she continues to study hard so that next time, it will be her turn to help other deserving students who will be in a similar situation," he said.

Jace Pineda said that UFO's donation is a big help. "After their donation, I only need $500 to pay for my tuition," she said.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte, second from right, hands the $500 donation to 15-year-old Jace Pineda, who was with parents Elmer and Tess Pineda and sister Jessica, during the group's Christmas party at the Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel on Dec. 30. The Kagman High School sophomore has been selected to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine in New York this July.

Her family will supplement this by selling hot lunches on Jan. 28 and hosting a talent showdown for Kagman High School students at Garapan Central Park next month.

Elmer Pineda, a maintenance staff at Palms Resort, expressed appreciation for UFO's donation. "I'm really proud of my daughter because I know she's very dedicated in her studies. She has already set her mind [to] attending the forum so I would do everything I can to make [it happen] and not disappoint her. That's a promise," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said he plans to raise money for Jace's pocket money and corporate attire by soliciting from various companies and organizations on island.

He said Tan Siu Lin Foundation also donated $500 to their cause last year.

Elmer Pineda disclosed that they have also asked for assistance from Education Commissioner Rita Sablan and Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan to sponsor Jace's airfare. He said he will be informed about their decision by April.

To help Jace Pineda, call 287-5735.

The National Youth Leadership Forum was founded in 1992 and has empowered the nation's highest-achieving high school and university students with the confidence to make well-informed life choices that will prepare them for bright academic futures and successful professional careers.

Consulate promotes July tour of the Philippines

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General is inviting interested community members to take part in the 7th Ambassadors, Consuls General, and Tourism Directors Tour to the Philippines on July 11 to 15.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig said yesterday that he will lead the CNMI delegation during the event, which is a flagship tourism project of Philippine embassies and consulates in the United States and Canada conceptualized in 2004 to lure *balikbayans,* Americans, and Canadians to the country every summer—around July in North America.

Macaraig

"The highlight of this tour is a visit with the President and a tour of the Malacañang Museum, which is usually not open to the public," Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

Last year's tour saw over 500 delegates from all over the United States and Canada, the biggest turnout in six years. Macaraig noted that there were no representatives from the CNMI at the time.

According to Macaraig, the estimated cost for this year's tour is around $1,800 per person. This includes a four- to five-night stay at a hotel in Manila with daily breakfast buffet; lunch at the Malacañang Palace [presidential palace similar to the White House]; three dinners with special entertainment; choice of out-of-town day tour; cultural, religious, social, business seminars and immersion activities; numerous reasonably-priced post-tour options; and surprise gifts.

Macaraig said event organizers are inclined to feature in the day tour either a visit to the country's colonial heritage such as old churches and other structures or a culinary tour.

Organizers are also considering a visit to the Coconut Palace, which serves as the residence of the Philippine Vice President.

"There is already an expression of interest in this event. At least four individuals have already informed me that they would like to be part of the tour," said Macaraig.

He said the Consulate will coordinate this event until they turn over the task to a travel agency on island.

"The usual deadline to sign up for this tour is toward the end of May or until June," he added.

Macaraig encouraged Filipino workers in the CNMI and the rest of the community who have not been to the Philippines in a while to take advantage of this opportunity to explore the country and get a chance to meet the President and other delegates from the United States and Canada.

For more information, call 234-1850.

Masons, Consulate lead 115th Rizal Day celebration

The Free and Accepted Masons of Emon Lodge No. 179 partnered with the Philippine Consulate General in commemorating the 115th death anniversary of Philippine national hero Jose P. Rizal on Dec. 30.

Some 15 masons, Consulate staffers, and guests took part in the brief yet solemn program that featured a flag raising ceremony outside the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe at 9am followed by the reading of Rizal's biography, including the hourly account of the time leading to his death, and the reading of one of Rizal's famous works, Mi Ultimo Adios.

"Since Dr. Jose Rizal being a Mason, Emon Lodge has decided to get involved with the celebration of Rizal's birthday and death anniversary and we plan to continue to do so. Rizal's martyrdom sparked the revolution that led to our country's independence," Emon Lodge incoming Senior Warden Edwin Arenas told *Saipan Tribune*.

Arenas said it is an honor to be part of an organization to which Rizal, who helped free the Filipinos from colonial rule, belonged.

"We will remain committed to recognizing Dr. Rizal's contributions to the Philippine society by commemorating his important dates," added Arenas.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig, for his part, said that the Filipinos should continue honoring Rizal.

"As our national hero, Rizal has a lot of contributions to what the Philippines is right now and it is important to honor him for those contributions. The Consulate is happy the Emon Lodge agreed to continue this partnership even beyond 2011," said Macaraig. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Consul General Medardo Macaraig, third left, join the Free and Accepted Masons of Emon Lodge No. 179 during the flag-raising ceremony commemorating the 115th death anniversary of Philippine national hero Dr. Jose P. Rizal on Dec. 30, 2011.

New Mason officers to be installed in Feb.

The new set of elected and appointed officers of the Free and Accepted Masons of Emon Lodge No. 179 will be inducted in an installation ceremony next month.

The event is slated for Feb. 4 at the Saipan Senior World Resort at 6pm.

Incoming officers are Wilfredo Ching, worshipful master; Edwin Arenas, senior warden; Pepe Crisostomo, junior warden; Casiano Bostre, treasurer; Daniel Banez, secretary; Victor Brana, auditor; Edward Cornette, chaplain; Isagani Benoza, marshall; Romeo Malasarte, senior deacon; Melvin Demonteverde, junior deacon; Bro. Celso Gianchand, orator; Danilo San Pedro, lecturer; Roque Pagalanan, Jr., almoner; Robert Murdock, Senior Steward; Jeffery Warfield, junior steward; Amando Neglerio, organist; and Elias Buenaventura, tyler.

Incoming Senior Warden Edwin Arenas said yesterday that the new set of officers will serve a one-year term. The organization is composed of some 40 members on and off-island.

"As part of the new set of officers, I hope that we would be able to conduct more fundraising activities to help more people. I also wish that there will be a fruitful and harmonious relationship among brothers of Emon Lodge," added Arenas. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

Landslide kills 25, buries dozens more in Philippines

By OLIVER TEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A landslide tore through a tiny gold-mining village in the southern Philippines on Thursday, killing 25 people and burying dozens more, months after the government warned residents the mountain was certain to crumble.

The mountainside in Napnapan village in Pantukan township collapsed around 3 a.m., when most residents were asleep, sweeping away about 50 houses, shanties and other buildings, officials said. A fissure in the mountain discovered last year likely was aggravated by heavy rains and continuous mining in the saturated ground.

Thousands of poor Filipinos dig and pan for gold in the area, hoping to strike it rich despite the dangers of largely unregulated mining. The tunnels are often unstable and landslides and accidents are common.

Aside from those confirmed dead, more than 100 people were believed buried in the earth rubble, Compostela Valley provincial Gov. Arturo Uy said.

Scores of soldiers and volunteers were helping villagers dig for survivors and bodies, regional military spokesman Col. Leopoldo Galon said. The bodies of two girls aged 6 and 14 were among those retrieved, he said.

At least 16 people were taken to a hospital, with six in critical condition, Galon said.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje said he had warned residents and local officials last year of a fissure on a ridge of the mountain that geologists said was "highly susceptible" to landslides that could occur anytime.

"We were absolute that it will give in," he told The Associated Press. "It was a 100 percent warning. We told them it's just a matter of time. ... This is it. This is what happened this morning."

Pantukan town spokesman Arnulfo Lantayan said heavy rains were hampering search and rescue work and increased the risk further slides "because there is still earth movement."

Photos taken by the army's 10th Infantry Division after the landslide show a steep mountainside that looks like it was gouged by a giant shovel. Houses not buried by the rubble were lying on their sides while crumpled tin roofs and trees lay nearby.

One tunnel entrance appeared half covered by rocks and soil. It was unclear how many mine shafts have been blocked by debris.

AP

In this photo released by the Philippine Army, residents search for victims following a landslide that occurred at the small-scale mining community of Pantukan, Compostela Valley in southern Philippines Thursday Jan. 5, 2012.

Saul Pingoy, a local resident, told DZMM radio that he was sleeping in a house about 50 yards (meters) away from the landslide when he felt the ground shake and heard rocks falling on roofs.

"The mountain itself was already sending a warning with falling rocks. That's why we were woken up ... and then it collapsed," he said. "Big boulders and the ground from the mountain covered the area."

Darwin Aguinawon, a 27-year-old logger, told reporters he heard what sounded like a "dump truck unloading gravel and sand" and seconds later his house tumbled down the slope. He saw a fellow miner tossed outside the house through where a wall once stood.

Compostela Valley province is on the main southern Philippine island of Mindanao, where flash floods triggered by a tropical storm killed more than 1,250 people in December. Uy, the governor, said miners and their families had been warned that the heavy rains made the small tunnels and mine shafts that honeycomb the hills and mountains more dangerous.

Uy said authorities advised residents as early as Dec. 16 when Tropical Storm Washi was sweeping across Mindanao to leave their tunnels, "but unfortunately some have not responded to our advisories."

Hundreds of residents near the site of Thursday's slide were forced to evacuate last April after a landslide killed about 20 people.

Uy said it was difficult to monitor the "extremely high risk area" because it is so remote and some residents who were evacuated in April may have "sneaked back."

Paje said the April slide occurred in Kingking village beside Napnapan. Both villages are part of a 74,130-acre (30,000-hectare) watershed that has been scarred by landslides over the years.

He urged local officials to stop giving small-scale mining permits, now estimated to number about 3,000 all around the watershed.

"Had they listened to us and stopped the entry (of miners), there would have been no casualty," he said.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

Philippine inflation climbs to 4.8 percent in 2011

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Central bank Gov. Amando Tetangco says inflation remains "manageable" even though it rose 4.8 percent in 2011. Government data on Thursday showed year-on-year inflation fell to 4.2 percent in December from 4.8 percent in November. December inflation a year earlier was 3.6 percent. Inflation for 2011 climbed to 4.8 percent from 3.8 percent in 2010. Tetangco says the rate was within the government's target range of up to 5 percent for 2011 and shows that "inflation remains manageable over the policy horizon." But he says the bank continues to watch global developments including in the Middle East.

Syria promises to help facilitate Filipinos' exit

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario says nearly 1,000 of 10,000 Filipinos in Syria will have been repatriated by next month amid escalating violence there. Some 500 Filipinos have fled since a political crisis erupted in Syria in March. Del Rosario told reporters Wednesday at least 400 more workers may be home within a month. Del Rosario has just returned from Syria. He thanked Syrian officials for facilitating Filipinos workers' exit. The Philippines has urged Filipinos to leave Syria at the government's expense. But del Rosario says none of the Filipinos he met there wants be repatriated, citing lack of economic opportunities at home. The Philippines is one of the world's largest labor exporters.

Philippines doubles bounty on fugitive ex-general

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine government has doubled to 1 million pesos ($23,200) the reward for the capture of a former army general accused of kidnapping two left-wing student activists. Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said Thursday the bounty will be given to anyone with "significant information" that will lead to the arrest of former Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan. Palparan is charged with kidnapping Karen Empeno and Sherlyn Cadapan in 2006. They remain missing. Palparan has retired and has denied involvement in their disappearance. A fact-finding commission that investigated extra-judicial killings and other human rights violations has named Palparan as one of the military commanders who could be held responsible. Palparan has called the allegations communist propaganda.

Bear with heavy traffic with 'Bourne Legacy'

By KAREN BONCOCAN, MARINEL R. CRUZ
INQUIRER.NET, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Can a car chase really go far in the chaotic, ever-congested streets of Metro Manila? Only in the movies!

Local officials are bracing for some Hollywood action—and possibly a barrage of complaints—as they advised motorists about the closure of several roads starting next week to make way for the filming of "The Bourne Legacy," the latest in the movie franchise based on the espionage series created by Robert Ludlum.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Francis Tolentino said his agency would try to ease the effects of the road closures during rush hours by designating alternative routes.

But he also assured motorists that most of the shoots would be done during the wee hours of the morning or late at night.

Tolentino said the MMDA would also tidy up the areas selected by the production team to make a good impression on international moviegoers.

Road to avoid, when

In the City of Manila, the mayor's office said it had granted permits to use the following roads for the "Bourne" shoot:

San Andres Street from Jan. 11 to 15; J. Bocobo Street corner Remedios Circle from January 18 to 19; Leveriza Street (from Balingkit to San Andres) on January 15; San Andres Street corner Quirino and Taft Avenues on January 14; Riverside Road, Real and Sta. Lucia Streets in Intramuros on January 25, and February 17 and 18; Jones Bridge on February 5; and R. Magsaysay Boulevard from February 8 to 15.

The city government also granted permits for the use of Remedios Circle in Malate from January 18 to 19, according to Rafaelito Garayblas, secretary to Mayor Alfredo Lim.

Tolentino said one of the scenes to be shot would be a car chase in the Edsa-Taft Avenue area in Pasay City—which, in real life, is notorious for round-the-clock traffic jams.

There will also be scenes on Ayala Avenue in Makati City, at the Marikina City public market, and at the Navotas City fish port, he said.

Manila part of story

Manila will serve as the setting for the "climax" or the last 20 to 25 minutes of the film, according to Film Development Council of the Philippines Chairman Briccio Santos.

"Most of the movie's action scenes would be filmed here. I heard that (lead actress) Rachel Weisz would be riding a jeepney as it spins around," Santos told the Philippine Daily Inquirer. "A chase scene would also be shot along the MRT (Metro Rail Transit) line."

He noted that "Manila would be filmed as Manila" and not as a stand-in for another city.

"Manila is part of the story," he said. "What I know is that Bourne's group comes here in search of a rare medication and some forces are trying to stop them."

He said all the cast members, including Oscar-nominated actor Jeremy Renner, had already arrived in the country. "This is a good thing. This film will bring us back on the map. In the future, we hope to accommodate more of these foreign films here."

Some parts of the film would also be shot in scenic spots in Palawan province, Santos added.

Written and directed by Tony Gilroy, Bourne Legacy is the fourth installment of the blockbuster series. The first three had Matt Damon play the title character, Jason Bourne. ***With a report from Jaymee Gamil***

Aussie kidnapped in Philippines seeks $2M ransom

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A former Australian soldier kidnapped in the southern Philippines is seen in a video sent to his family pleading for his life and urging Manila and Canberra to raise a $2 million ransom being demanded by his captors.

The video of 53-year-old Warren Richard Rodwell, along with four photographs showing him in handcuffs and apparently wounded in the right hand, were mailed to his Filipino wife before Christmas, Philippine police officials said. The Associated Press saw a copy of the video and photos Thursday.

Rodwell

Wearing a sweater and appearing to read from a piece of paper, Rodwell tried to clear his throat as he spoke in the brief video, which was given by his family to Philippine police investigators. Looking haggard and unshaven, he squinted his eyes at times and stood in front of a blue tarpaulin covering a backdrop of vegetation. While saying he was once with the Australian army, Rodwell suggested the terrain he was in was difficult.

One of the photos showed a silver handcuff and its chain dangling from his left wrist. The side of his right palm appeared to be wounded.

In Melbourne, Australia, Home Affairs and Justice Minister Brendan O'Connor told reporters that Australian officials were working with Philippine authorities to ensure Rodwell's safe release, but he refused to divulge more details. When asked about the kidnappers' demand for money, he said Australia has a policy of not paying ransom.

Samu't Sari

United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte, fifth from right, hands the $500 donation to 15-year-old Jace Pineda during the group's Christmas party at the Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel last Dec. 30.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Friends Yvonne Rose Cabrera and Beau Tomokane show off their certificates after trying out the Bing Beng Bang shooting range in Garapan on New Year's Eve.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

United Filipino Organization's Flor Miranda, center, teaches the group's male members dance instructions for a game during their Christmas party on Dec. 30.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Aging Center congregate Maria Salinas gets her photo taken with an Umang Glee Club member during the group's visit to the *man'amko* on Dec. 29.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Members of the United Filipino Organization pose for a group photo during their Christmas party at the Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel last Dec. 30.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Burger & Comer's Dorie Manibusan, third left, enjoys Paskong Pinoy 2011 festivities with family and friends last Dec. 17.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Members of the Gloria Dei Choir smile for the camera at the Paskong Pinoy 2011 grounds last Dec. 17.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Ranulfo Baltazar, wife Isabel, and daughter Reinabel smile for the camera as they wait for the start of Paskong Pinoy 2011 at the Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 17.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Advanced happy 3rd birthday to our princess, JoDean Desiree, who will celebrate her special day on Sunday, Jan. 8! We love you!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

Holiday discounts crimp retailers' profits

NEW YORK (AP)—The 2011 holiday shopping season will go down in the record books as the year the Grinch stole stores' profits.

Many retailers sacrificed their bottom lines by pushing heavy discounts to shoppers bent on getting a good deal in a challenging economy. That created a sharp divide between stores that won the battle for wallets, and those that didn't.

The big winners? Shoppers who held out for deals late in the season.

Retailers collectively reported a 3.5 percent increase in revenue at stores open at least a year for December, according to a tally of 25 merchants compiled by the International Council of Shopping Centers. For November and December combined, the figure rose 3.3 percent, a solid increase but still behind last year's 3.8 percent pace.

The figures are based on revenue at stores open at least a year. That is considered a key indicator of a retailer's health because it excludes results from stores recently opened or closed.

Retailers depend on the holidays, when they bring in as much as 40 percent of their annual revenue. The season also gives give valuable insights into what it takes to get Americans to spend in the weak economy. Clearly, the rich kept spending, but for everyone else, it took a hot item like Apple's iPad or right-on exclusive fashions—or a lot of "50 percent" off signs.

Winners included Limited Brands Inc., Macy's Inc., TJX Cos. and Nordstrom Inc., which posted strong revenue gains that beat analysts' estimates. Macy's, Ross and Limited even boosted their earnings outlooks.

On the losing side, Target Corp., Kohl's Corp., and J.C. Penney Co. cut their fourth-quarter earnings projections after reporting weaker-than-expected sales. Gap had a big sales decline.

"There's no question that the divide is getting wider, and will get even wider this year as the winners continue to take share away from rivals," said Joel Bines, managing director in the retail practice of AlixPartners. "Consumers have limited time, money and attention, and they're investing in a smaller subset of retailers."

AP

In this Dec. 13, 2011 photo, Brad Cheskes of Chicago, shops at the Macy's on State Street store in Chicago. Many retailers are reporting solid sales gains for December, capping a decent holiday season.

Retailers will report fourth-quarter earnings next month. The fullest picture of holiday spending will come in next week's government retail sales report, which captures more categories like home improvement and electronics.

Heading into the season, stores knew it would be challenging to lure shoppers dealing with high unemployment, paltry wage growth and higher basic household costs. So retailers plied customers with free shipping and promised to match rivals' prices. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. resurrected layaway to help shoppers finance their purchases.

For the semi-official start of the shopping season, stores opened as early as Thanksgiving Day, pushing big discounts that resulted in record sales. But shoppers took a longer-than-usual breather after that early splurge. A mild winter and Christmas falling on a Sunday also encouraged people to wait until the last minute.

That forced many stores like American Eagle Outfitters Inc. to slash prices on coats and other cold-weather merchandise more than planned.

Stores' success relied partly on what they sell and who they sell it to.

Among discounters, Costco Wholesale Corp., known for selling discounted household basics in bulk, continue to resonate with recession-weary shoppers. Its revenue at stores open at least a year rose 7 percent in December.

Discount chains like Ross Stores Inc. and TJX Cos., which sell name-brand merchandise at bargain prices, were also standouts, pulling in shoppers looking for high-quality merchandise for less money.

But Target posted just a 1.6 percent gain for December on weak sales of electronics, books and music. A rebounding Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which used the holiday to hammer its low-price message, offered a fresh challenge. Wal-Mart no longer reports monthly sales. Jharrone Martis-Olivo, director of research at Thomson Reuters also noted in a report Thursday that Amazon.com has stolen some market share in electronics.

GM to add more steel to Volt to protect battery

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors is advising Volt owners to return their electric cars to dealers for repairs that will lower the risk of battery fires.

The company hopes that, by adding steel to the plates protecting the batteries, it will ease worries about the car's safety. Three Volt batteries caught fire after government crash tests last year, prompting a federal investigation and sending GM engineers scrambling to find a fix.

Eligible for the free repairs, announced Thursday, are 8,000 Volts on U.S. roads and another 4,400 still for sale. The cars are covered by a "customer satisfaction program" run by GM, which is similar to a safety recall but allows the carmaker to avoid the bad publicity and federal monitoring that come with a recall.

GM and federal safety officials believe last year's fires were caused by coolant leaking from damaged plastic casing around the batteries after side-impact collisions. The coolant caused an electrical short, which sparked battery fires seven days to three weeks after the crashes. No owners have reported fires after crashes.

GM has a huge incentive to fix the problem and protect the Volt's image. Although the car isn't a big seller—it's fallen short of sales goals—it burnishes GM's image as a greener, more innovative carmaker.

The safety stumble could make it even harder for the Chevrolet Volt to compete with rival electric cars such as the Nissan Leaf. To contain the bad publicity after the fires, GM last year offered to buy back Volts from worried owners.

Adding the steel will spread the force of a crash over a larger area, says Mary Barra, GM's product development chief. Tests by GM and the government have shown that the repairs, to start in February, will prevent battery damage and coolant leaks.

"We have made the Volt even safer," says Mark Reuss, GM's North American president.

New year starts with hopeful outlook on hiring

WASHINGTON (AP)—The job market is looking a little brighter at the start of the new year.

Weekly unemployment benefit applications have fallen to levels last seen more than three years ago. Holiday sales were solid. Service companies grew a little faster in December. And many small businesses say they plan to add jobs over the next three months.

The mix of private and government data released Thursday sketched a picture of an economy that is slowly strengthening, stoking optimism one day ahead of the government's important read on December job growth.

"Businesses have increased hiring to meet the underlying pick-up in (consumer) demand," said Neil Dutta, an economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

The encouraging reports on the U.S. economy gave Wall Street a late-day lift, offsetting renewed concerns over Europe's debt crisis. The Dow Jones industrial average, which had fallen by as much as 134 points at one point in the day, closed down just 3 points. Broader indexes posted modest gains.

Weekly applications for unemployment benefits dropped to a seasonally adjusted 372,000 last week, the Labor Department said Thursday. That's 11 percent lower than the same time last year. Almost the entire descent occurred this fall. Applications had fluctuated sharply over the first nine months of 2011, falling as low as 375,000 and rising as high as 478,000. By early September, they were at 432,000—only 5,000 below where they began the year.

Since then, applications have declined steadily. That has pushed the four-week average, which smooths fluctuations, to 373,250—the lowest level since June 2008.

When applications drop below 375,000—consistently—they generally signal that hiring is strong enough to reduce the unemployment rate.

U.S. service firms, which employ roughly 90 percent of the work force, grew a little faster in December, according to the Institute for Supply Management.

The trade group of purchasing managers said its index of non-manufacturing activity rose to 52.6. That's slightly above November's reading of 52—the lowest in nearly two years—but well below last year's high of 59.7 recorded in February.

Any reading above 50 indicates expansion.

An increase in new orders and stronger imports drove last month's modest expansion. But a gauge of hiring showed many service firms were hesitant to add workers.

Retailers, meanwhile, reported solid but not spectacular sales gains last month. And much of the increase stemmed from heavy discounting that will likely cut into profits.

Whistleblower gives up fight to head Olympus again

TOKYO (AP)—The Olympus Corp. executive who blew the whistle on dubious spending at the Japanese camera and medical equipment maker said Friday he is giving up his fight to regain the presidency.

Michael Woodford said in a statement he "will today withdraw from any further action to form an alternative slate of directors," as he failed to win support from major institutional investors.

Olympus said it was unaware of the decision and had no immediate comment.

The deception at Olympus dates back to the 1990s, and involved an elaborate scheme to hide 117.7 billion yen ($1.5 billion) in investment losses.

In October, Woodford confronted Olympus management about the excessive spending, which later proved to be part of the cover-up. He was quickly fired as president.

Since then, Olympus has admitted to the cover-up and has apologized.

But Woodford, 51, a Briton, who had been a rare foreigner at the helm of a major Japanese company, began his campaign for a comeback at Olympus.

He said Olympus needed a new board of directors, mostly outsiders, to make a fresh start, ensure transparency and leave the scandal behind.

In his latest statement, Woodford criticized the system of cross-shareholdings at old-style Japanese companies, in which big-name companies hold stakes in each other to ensure stability. That system also works to maintain the status quo.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
12,415.70	1,281.06	2,69.86
-2.72	+3.76	+21.50
-0.02%	+0.29%	+0.81%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9711	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7664	Philippine Peso	43.9947
British Pound	0.6428	Indian Rupee	53.7924	Singapore Dollar	1.2871
Canadian Dollar	1.0161	Indonesian Rupiah	9,157.5	South Korean Won	1,153.6
Chinese Yuan	6.3259	Japanese Yen	76.8640	Swiss Franc	0.9467
Euro	0.7769	Malaysian Ringgit	3.1457	Taiwan Dollar	30.4414
		New Zealand Dollar	1.2756	Thailand Baht	31.6456

Nation

Obama launches reshaping, shrinking of US military

WASHINGTON (AP)—Looking beyond the wars he inherited, President Barack Obama on Thursday launched a reshaping and shrinking of the military. He vowed to preserve U.S. preeminence even as the Army and Marine Corps shed troops and the administration considers reducing its arsenal of nuclear weapons.

The changes won't come without risk, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said. But he called it acceptable and, because of budget restraints, inevitable.

In a presentation at the Pentagon, Obama said the U.S. is "turning a page" after having killed Osama bin Laden, withdrawn troops from Iraq and begun to wind down the war in Afghanistan. He outlined a vision for the future that some Republican lawmakers quickly dubbed wrong-headed.

"Our military will be leaner, but the world must know the United States is going to maintain our military superiority," Obama said with Panetta and the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Gen. Martin Dempsey, at his side.

In a presidential election year the strategy gives Obama a rhetorical tool to defend his Pentagon budget-cutting choices. Republican contenders for the White House already have attacked him on national security issues including missile defense, Iran and planned reductions in ground forces.

AP

President Barack Obama speaks at the Pentagon, Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012, on the defense strategic guidance. From left are, Army Secretary John McHugh, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the president, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin E. Dempsey and Navy Secretary Ray Mabus.

Obama unveiled the results of an eight-month defense strategy review that is intended to guide decisions on cutting hundreds of billions from planned Pentagon spending over the coming decade. The eight-page document contained no details about how broad concepts for reshaping the military—such as focusing more on Asia and less on Europe—will translate into troop or weapons cuts.

Those details will be included in the 2013 defense budget to be submitted to Congress next month.

In about every major war or defense speech Obama hits themes intended to resonate with American voters—mainly, that the United States is turning a page from two wars, and that any nation-building will focus on improving the United States, not strategic allies abroad.

The economy is more likely to determine Obama's re-election fate than national security. To keep his promises to shrink the deficit and to prove he is serious about fiscal management to voters wary of enormous government spending, Obama must show the oft-protected Pentagon is not exempt.

The political danger, though, is that his opponents will use any slashing of spending to paint the president as weak on security.

Both Panetta and Dempsey said they anticipate heavy criticism of their new strategy, which was begun last spring by then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates after Obama called for defense spending cuts. The Pentagon now faces at least $487 billion in cuts in planned defense spending over 10 years.

The criticism from Republicans came quickly.

Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon, R-Calif., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, issued a statement saying, "This is a lead-from-behind strategy for a left-behind America." He called it a "retreat from the world in the guise of a new strategy."

Panetta said that smaller military budgets will mean some trade-offs and that the U.S. will take on "some level of additional but acceptable risk." But in a changing world the Pentagon would have been forced to make a strategy shift anyway, he said. The money crisis merely forced the government's hand.

Source: Admin. plans change in immigration rule

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration plans a rule change to help reduce the time illegal immigrant spouses and children are separated from citizen relatives while they try to win legal status in the United States, a senior administration official said Thursday.

Currently, illegal immigrants must leave the country before they can ask the government to waive a three- to 10-year ban on legally coming back to the U.S. The length of the ban depends on how long they have lived in the U.S. without permission.

The official said the new rule would let children and spouses of citizens ask the government to decide on the waiver request before the illegal immigrant heads to his or her home country to apply for a visa. The illegal immigrants still must go home to finish the visa process to come back to the U.S., but getting the waiver ahead of time could reduce the time an illegal immigrant is out of the country.

The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the proposed policy change had not been made public.

The waiver shift is the latest move by President Barack Obama to make changes to immigration policy without congressional action. Congressional Republicans repeatedly have criticized the administration for policy changes they describe as providing "backdoor amnesty" to illegal immigrants.

Immigrants who do not have criminal records and who have only violated immigration laws can win a waiver if they can prove that their absence would cause an "extreme hardship" for their citizen spouse or parent. The government received about 23,000 hardship applications in 2011 and more than 70 percent were approved, the official said.

Applications for the waiver can take as long as six months to be acted upon, the official said. The new rule is expected to reduce that processing time to just days or weeks, the official added.

"This would streamline the process (and) reduce the time of separation between family members," the official said.

The proposal will be published in the Federal Register on Friday. The official said the administration hopes to change the rule later this year.

Immigration has become a difficult issue for Obama ahead of the November election. As a presidential candidate, he pledged to change what many consider to be a broken immigration system.

To that end, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano announced plans last year to review some 300,000 pending deportation cases in an effort to target criminal illegal immigrants, repeat immigration law violators and those who pose a national security or public safety threat. Napolitano said the DHS would delay indefinitely the cases of many illegal immigrants who have no criminal record and those who have been arrested for only minor traffic violations or other misdemeanors.

Officials investigate case of deported Texas teen

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—The grandmother of a Dallas teen who was deported to Colombia is hoping the 15-year-old can come back soon and says federal officials should have done more to identify the girl after she gave a fake name and claimed to be an adult.

Turner

Immigration officials say they're investigating the circumstances of the case involving Jakadrien Lorece Turner, but that they followed procedure and found nothing to indicate she wasn't who she claimed to be—an illegal immigrant from Colombia.

The girl, who ran away from home more than a year ago, was recently found in Bogota, Colombia, by the Dallas Police Department with help from Colombian and U.S. officials. It was unclear when she might return to the U.S. or whether she would face charges.

Her grandmother, Dallas hairstylist Lorene Turner, calls the deportation a "big mistake somebody made" and said federal officials need to do better.

"She looks like a kid, she acts like a kid. How could they think she wasn't a kid?" Lorene Turner asked on Thursday.

Rivals go hard after Romney, who goes after Obama

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP)—Mitt Romney's Republican presidential rivals repeatedly attacked him as a candidate of the status quo and a timid, less-than-reliable conservative Thursday as they simultaneously sought to slow his campaign momentum and personally audition for the role of conservative rival-in- chief.

"Don't settle for less than America needs," said Rick Santorum, eager to capitalize on his second-place finish behind the former Massachusetts governor in this week's Iowa caucuses, a scant eight votes off the pace.

A heavy favorite to win New Hampshire's primary next Tuesday, Romney all but ignored his Republican rivals as he campaigned in two states. Instead, he criticized President Barack Obama as a "crony capitalist. He's a job killer."

Without saying so, the rest of the field appeared to share a common campaign objective—hold down Romney's vote totals in New Hampshire, then knock him off stride 11 days later in South Carolina, the first Southern primary of the year.

Romney benefited handsomely from having several rivals split the vote in Iowa, where his winner's share was roughly 25 percent.

"Gradually you are going to see we have a difference of opinion about which will be the last conservative standing," former House Speaker Newt Gingrich told reporters as he campaigned in New Hampshire. "But I think you'll eventually come down to one conservative and Gov. Romney and he'll continue to get 25 percent."

Also vying to emerge as Romney's chief rival were Texas Rep. Ron Paul and former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman, while Texas Gov. Rick Perry awaited South Carolina. "We can't afford to have a status quo president," Huntsman said in Durham, N.H. "We can't afford to have a coronation for president."

Gingrich unveiled a new television commercial aimed at voters in New Hampshire and South Carolina that cited one review of Romney's jobs program as timid and nearly identical in part to the president's.

ELECTION 2012

Mitt Romney's tax plan

An analysis of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's tax plan shows how it would affect different income groups:

Income group (In 2011 dollars)	Average federal tax change (Under the Romney proposal, in dollars)
Less than $10,000	$112
10,000-20,000	191
20,000-30,000	126
30,000-40,000	14
40,000-50,000	-27
50,000-75,000	-249
75,000-100,000	-490
100,000-200,000	-1,146
200,000-500,000	-5,195
500,000-1 million	-19,853
More than 1 million	-145,568

Source: Tax Policy Center Graphic: Judy Treible, Robert Dorrell

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Asia

Suu Kyi tells AP: Myanmar army could block reforms

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi cautioned Thursday that the democratic reforms started by Myanmar's nominally civilian government are not "unstoppable" and will succeed only if the powerful military accepts the changes.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate said she is cautiously optimistic more progess can be made.

Her comments in an interview with The Associated Press were clearly meant to caution the West not to get carried away by the reforms and to remind it that Myanmar's long-ruling military still wields enormous power despite a veneer of democracy provided by the elections.

"I wouldn't say that there are many dangers, but I wouldn't say that it is unstoppable either. I think there are obstacles, and there are some dangers that we have to look out for," Suu Kyi said.

"I am concerned about how much support there is in the military for changes. In the end that's the most important factor, how far the military are prepared to cooperate with reform principles."

She spoke as she and her National League for Democracy moved closer to full participation in mainstream electoral politics. The government approved the party's registration Thursday, and the NLD can now pick candidates to run in by-elections on April 1.

The party decided to rejoin electoral politics after the military-backed but elected government took office in March, replacing army rule and tenatively easing years of repression. Its changes included legalizing labor unions, increasing press freedom and opening a dialogue with Suu Kyi.

Critics have characterized the NLD's decision to rejoin electoral politics as a capitulation after years of resistance to military rule. The party won a 1990 general election but was denied power after the military refused to allow parliament to be seated. In 2010, the military held another general election, but the NLD found the rules unfair and declined to participate, leading to its being purged from the list of legal political parties.

The critics fear the NLD's participation helps the government maintain a veneer of legitimacy for what is actually—by constitutional statute, as well as the majority held by pro-military lawmakers—continued domination of politics by the army.

"I think this year we shall find out whether we are making progress toward democracy," Suu Kyi said, adding that benchmarks to consider are "the release of all political prisoners,... how the by-elections are conducted,... how much more freedom of information is allowed and whether strong steps are taken to establish the rule of law."

The release of political prisoners—estimated to number between 600 and 1,700—is a touchstone for reformers and activists abroad.

AP

In this video image Aung San Suu Kyi the general-secretary of Myanmar's opposition National League for Democracy speaks to the Associated Press during an interview at her residence in Yangon, Myanmar Thursday Jan. 5, 2012.

Several mass amnesties for convicts have resulted in the release of more than 200 political detainees, but many high-profile prisoners still are serving long terms. The latest release on Tuesday met with particular disappointment, because hopes had been raised by the government's increased engagement with the NLD and foreign countries critical of the military, evidenced most notably by the December visit of U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. British Foreign Secretary William Hague is visiting this week, bringing the same message of encouraging reforms.

Hague is the first British foreign secretary to visit Myanmar since 1955. In meetings with President Thein Sein and other government officials in Naypyitaw on Thursday, he emphasized "the importance the British government attaches to the reforms that the Burmese government has undertaken in the last six months," he said in a statement released in London.

Britain continues to call Myanmar by its name under British rule, rather than the local government's official designation.

Though Hague's two-day visit signals a shift in relations, Britain won't promise any immediate change in European Union sanctions on arms sales, asset freezes and travel bans—or change a policy that discourages U.K. businesses from trade with Myanmar.

He added Britain "expects to see the release of all political prisoners, credible by-elections in April, and a genuine alleviation of the suffering in ethnic areas."

Suu Kyi agreed that the failure to release more political detainees was "disappointing" but see the prisoners as the manifestation of a bigger problem, the "lack of rule of law," which means activists could be put away again for the flimsiest of reasons.

She said she feels there are differences among the authorities on who might actually pose a danger to society, opting for confrontation and causing unrest.

"I have always said it would be best to release everybody at the same time. Keeping some back does not really help. Nobody's grateful, everybody's disappointed if they release just a few," she said.

Suu Kyi said resolving the country's long-running ethnic conflicts is likely the more important issue over time, because "unless there is ethnic harmony it will be very difficult for us to build up a strong democracy." The country's sizable ethnic minorities have for decades struggled for greater autonomy, leading to cycles of brutal counterinsurgency war.

Although the previous military regime concluded ceasefires with many of the groups, the pacts have been precarious and some of the larger guerrilla armies never joined them. Despite an order by Thein Sein to cease hostilities, the military is engaged in a bloody struggle against the Kachin minority in the north, often overlooked because of its remote location and the positive developments nationally.

ASIA BRIEFS

US and SKorea discuss leadership change in NKorea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A senior U.S. diplomat says Washington is committed to strong ties with Seoul as the allies face a leadership transition in North Korea after Kim Jong Il's death. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell made the comments Thursday after meetings with South Korean officials in Seoul. Campbell says Washington is determined to be tightly aligned with Seoul as Kim Jong Il's son Kim Jong Un takes power in North Korea.

Tax case against China's Ai Weiwei to get review

BEIJING (AP)—Outspoken Chinese artist Ai Weiwei says Beijing tax authorities have agreed to review their ruling that he pay a multimillion dollar fine for alleged tax evasion. The internationally acclaimed conceptual artist said Friday that tax officials informed him of the decision Wednesday by telephone and said the review would be completed within two months. Ai said he was hopeful that the case would be handled earnestly and transparently. Ai was detained for three months last year during an overall crackdown on dissent. Following his release, authorities demanded his design company pay 15 million yuan ($2.4 million) in back taxes and fines, a penalty interpreted by activists as punishment for his criticism of the authoritarian government.

Chef and assistant die from Australian mushrooms

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—A chef and assistant from China died after eating poisonous mushrooms in a meal they prepared for a private dinner at a restaurant in Australia's capital. Chef Liu Jun, 38, and his female kitchen hand Tsou Hsiang, 52, died from liver failure at a hospital Tuesday night after eating death cap mushrooms on New Year's Eve at Canberra's Harmonie German Club. The two prepared the deadly stir fry in the kitchen of the club's Chinese bistro, but club manager Mick Thamer said Friday that the meal had not been available to the public.

Karzai demands US hand over Bagram prison

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—President Hamid Karzai demanded Thursday that the U.S. detention center at Bagram Air Base be handed over to Afghan control within a month, along with all Afghan citizens held by the coalition troops across the nation.

Meanwhile, three NATO service members were killed in an explosion in the south of the country, the coalition said. It did not provide any other details about the incident.

A presidential statement said that keeping Afghan citizens imprisoned without trial violates the country's constitution, as well as international human rights conventions.

The prison, inside the sprawling U.S. base at Bagram north of Kabul, abuts a well-known public detention center known as Parwan, which is run jointly by Afghan authorities and the U.S. military.

It's unclear how many high-value detainees are being held at the U.S. facility. Human rights groups have claimed that detainees were menaced, forced to strip naked and kept in solitary confinement in windowless cells.

A statement from Karzai's office said he issued instructions to a commission consisting of the ministers of defense, interior and justice, as well as other top government and judicial officials, "to complete their job regarding the handing over of the (Bagram) prison and other prisoners who are held by foreign forces."

"The work should be completed within a month," it said.

The U.S.-led NATO coalition is gradually handing over responsibility for security to the Afghan police and army. The process is due to be completed in 2014, when most foreign troops are scheduled to be withdrawn from Afghanistan.

Karzai's demands are the most recent in a series of exercises in political brinksmanship by the president, as he tries to bolster his negotiating position ahead of renewed talks for a Strategic Partnership Document with America that will determine the U.S. role in Afghanistan after 2014.

Among the conditions that Karzai has set is an end to night raids by international troops and complete Afghan control over detainees.

Karzai is walking a tightrope. Although he routinely plays to anti-American sentiment in Afghanistan by denouncing the U.S., he needs America's military and financial strength to back his weak government as it battles the Taliban insurgency.

The CIA's infamous secret network of "black site" interrogation centers is now gone, but suspected terrorists in Afghanistan are being held and interrogated for weeks at temporary sites, including one run by elite special operations forces at Bagram Air Base. The detainees include those suspected of top roles in the Taliban, al-Qaida or other militant groups.

British Red Cross worker kidnapped in Pakistan

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP)—Armed men kidnapped a British Red Cross worker from the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Thursday, police and the Red Cross said, highlighting the fragile security situation in the country.

The incident took place hours after Islamist militants elsewhere in the country killed 15 Pakistani security officers they seized last month close to the Afghan border and left their naked, bullet-riddled bodies sprawled on the ground.

Police officer Nazir Ahmed Kurd said the man was taken from a vehicle in an upscale housing complex in Quetta. The assailants bundled him into their car and drove off. Kurd said the man was visiting a local school.

Sitara Jabeen, an International Committee of the Red Cross spokeswoman, said health program manager Khalil Rasjed Dale, a British national, was on his way home from work in a clearly marked ICRC vehicle when he was seized near his residence.

In a statement, she said despite the incident, the ICRC would continue its humanitarian work in Pakistan. She called for a "rapid and unconditional release" of Dale.

Baluchistan province is home to Islamist militants and separatist insurgents.

Both groups have kidnapped foreigners and locals in the region before.

Another officer, Ahsan Mahboob, said the British man was traveling with a Pakistani doctor and a driver. They were not taken, he said.

World

Scores killed in Iraq bombings targeting Shiites

BAGHDAD (AP)—An apparently coordinated wave of bombings targeting Shiite Muslims killed at least 78 people in Iraq on Thursday, the second large-scale assault by militants since U.S. forces pulled out last month.

The attacks, which bore the hallmarks of Sunni insurgents, come ahead of a Shiite holy day that draws hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from across Iraq, raising fears of a deepening of sectarian bloodshed. Rifts along the country's Sunni-Shiite faultline just a few years ago pushed Iraq to the brink of civil war.

The bombings in Baghdad and outside the southern city of Nasiriyah appeared to be the deadliest in Iraq in more than a year.

Thursday's blasts occurred at a particularly unstable time for Iraq's fledgling democracy. A broad-based unity government designed to include the country's main factions is mired in a political crisis pitting politicians from the Shiite majority now in power against the Sunni minority, which reigned supreme under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

Some Iraqis blame that political discord for the lethal strikes.

"We hold the government responsible for these attacks. They (the politicians) are bickering over their seats and these poor people are killed in these blasts," said Baghdad resident Ali Qassim not long after the first bomb went off.

The attacks began during Baghdad's morning rush hour when explosions struck the capital's largest Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City and another district that contains a Shiite shrine, killing at least 30 people, according to police.

Several hours later, a suicide attack hit pilgrims heading to the Shiite holy city of Karbala, killing 48, police said. The explosions took place near Nasiriyah, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) southeast of Baghdad.

Hospital officials confirmed the causalities. Authorities spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to release figures of the dead and wounded, who numbered more than 100.

The blasts occurred in the run-up to Arbaeen, a holy day that marks the end of 40 days of mourning following the anniversary of the death of Imam Hussein, a revered Shiite figure. During this time, Shiite pilgrims—many on foot—make their way across Iraq to Karbala, south of Baghdad.

Baghdad military spokesman Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi said the aim of the attacks is "to create turmoil among the Iraqi people." He said it was too early to say who was behind the bombings.

Coordinated attacks aimed at Shiites are a tactic frequently used by Sunni insurgents.

The last U.S. combat troops left Iraq on Dec. 18, ending a nearly nine-year war. Many Iraqis worry that a resurgence of Sunni and Shiite militancy could follow the Americans' withdrawal. In 2006, a Sunni attack on a Shiite shrine triggered a wave of sectarian violence that pushed the country to the brink of civil war.

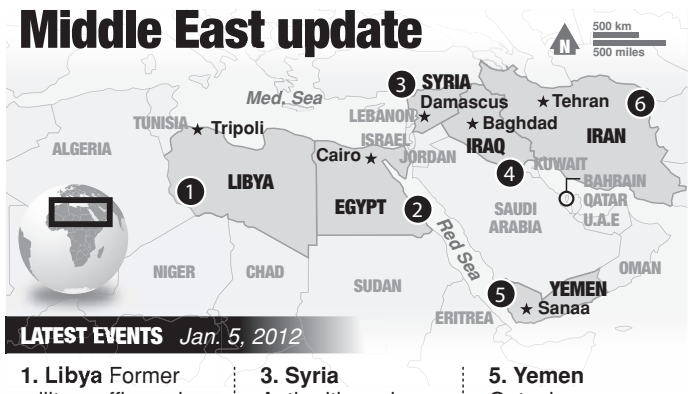
"People have real fears that the cycle of violence might be revived in this country," said Tariq Annad, a 52-year-old government employee in Sadr City, after Thursday's bombings.

Attacks on Wednesday targeted the homes of police officers and a member of a government-allied militia. Those strikes, in the cities of Baqouba and Abu Ghraib outside Baghdad, killed four people, including two children, officials said.

Two weeks earlier, militants killed at least 69 people as a wave of bombs ripped through mostly Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad. An al-Qaida front group in Iraq claimed responsibility.

Iraq's political mess is providing further ammunition for extremists.

Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government issued an arrest warrant for the country's top Sunni politician last month. The Sunni official, Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi, is holed up in Iraq's semiautonomous Kurdish region in the north—effectively out of reach of state security forces.



Qatar says Arab monitors in Syria made mistakes

BEIRUT (AP)—Qatar's prime minister said the Arab League observer mission in Syria has made "some mistakes" and he was turning to the United Nations for help.

Qatari Prime Minister Sheik Hamad bin Jassem Al Thani discussed the monthlong mission with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in New York on Wednesday amid mounting criticism that the observers are simply giving the Syrian regime cover for its ongoing crackdown on a nearly 10-month-old uprising.

"We are coming here for technical help and to see the experience the U.N. has, because this is the first time the Arab League is involved in sending monitors, and there are some mistakes," he said, according to Kuwait's state news agency.

Asked what kind of mistakes, he replied: "This is the first experience for us. I said we have to evaluate what sorts of mistakes we have (made). There is no doubt for me. I can see there are mistakes, but we went there not to stop the killing, but to monitor."

The Arab Gulf nation of Qatar has been at the forefront of criticism of Syria and has pushed for Arab League sanctions against Damascus.

About 100 Arab League observers are in Syria to assess whether President Bashar Assad's regime is abiding by an Arab peace plan that requires the government to remove security forces and heavy weapons from cities, start talks with opposition leaders and free political prisoners. The League claims it has won some concessions from Syria, including the pullout of heavy military weaponry from cities and the release of thousands of prisoners.

Assad agreed to the Arab peace plan on Dec. 19, but the Arab League has acknowledged that its plan has failed to stop violence. Activists have reported nearly 400 deaths since the monitors began work last week.

The Local Coordination Committees, an opposition group that tracks the deaths in Syria, said up to 20 people were killed in violence Thursday.

Syria's opposition is also accusing the regime of misleading the monitors by taking them to areas loyal to the government, changing street signs to confuse them, painting army vehicles blue to look like those of police and sending supporters into rebellious neighborhoods to give false testimony.

Simpson Miller sworn in 2nd time as Jamaica PM

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)—Portia Simpson Miller was sworn in for the second time as Jamaica's prime minister Thursday, pledging to ease its deep poverty, boost the sputtering economy, heal political divisions and sever colonial-era links with Britain.

Simpson Miller, whose 1 1/2-year-long first stint in office ended in 2007, took the oath of office before roughly 10,000 guests on the grounds of the rambling, colonial-style mansion that is the official residence of the governor-general.

The 66-year-old politician scored a dramatic victory in last week's national elections, leading her slightly left-leaning People's National Party to a 2-to-1 margin in Parliament over the center-right Jamaica Labor Party. Her opposition faction won a dominating 42 seats in the 63-seat legislature, leaving the incumbent party with 21.

The plainspoken, charismatic Simpson Miller, this Caribbean island's first female prime minister, takes over from Andrew Holness, a 39-year-old Labor lawmaker who was leader for just over two months.

"After being tested and tempered, I stand before you today a stronger and better person prepared to be of service to my country and people," Simpson Miller said at the start of a spirited 45-minute speech.

AP
Jamaica's Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller smiles after being sworn in at King's House in Kingston, Jamaica, Thursday Jan. 5, 2012.

She said her government intends to abandon the British monarch as Jamaica's official head of state, and instead adopt a republican form of government. Jamaica declared independence from Britain in 1962 but remains within the Commonwealth and has Queen Elizabeth II as head of state.

"I love the queen; she is a beautiful lady," Simpson Miller quipped, before speaking to the audience in Jamaican patois: "But I think time come."

Simpson Miller also said she will replace the Privy Council in London with the Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice as Jamaica's highest court of appeal. She said this will "end judicial surveillance from London."

She vowed her government will "ease the burdens and the pressues of increasing poverty, joblessness and deteriorating standards of living" while also pursuing a tight fiscal policy and forging strong partnerships with the private sector and international partners such as the International Monetary Fund.

"My administration will work tirelessly that while we try to balance the books we balance people's lives as well," Simpson Miller said.

Jamaica is a cash-strapped island with a punishing debt of roughly $18.6 billion, or 130 percent of gross domestic product.

In the short- and medium-term, the prime minister said her administration will use "state resources" to stimulate jobs through the Jamaica Emergency Employment Program, a centerpiece of her party's campaign manifesto.

WORLD BRIEFS

Holloway suspect begins Peru murder trial Friday

LIMA, Peru (AP)—Joran van der Sloot goes on trial in the murder of a young Peruvian woman Friday, nearly seven years after he became the prime suspect in the unsolved disappearance of an American teenager on holiday in Aruba. Van der Sloot, 24, is charged with killing 21-year-old Stephany Flores in his Lima hotel room on May 30, 2010, after the two left a casino together in the day's wee hours. The slaying happened five years to the day after the disappearance of Natalee Holloway, a 19-year-old from Alabama who was celebrating her high school graduation on the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba and was seen leaving a nightclub with Van der Sloot. Her body has never been found.

5 dead, others wounded in Nigeria church attack

GOMBE, Nigeria (AP)—Gunmen attacked a church in northeast Nigeria during a prayer service Thursday night, killing at least five people and wounding others in an assault that occurred amid an increasingly violent campaign by a radical Muslim sect. Pastor Johnson Jauro said the gunfire sprayed the Deeper Life Church in Gombe, the capital of Gombe state, injuring several worshippers and killing his wife and two others. He spoke at a local hospital, where a joint team of soldiers and police officers stood guard. Two other people later died at the hospital from their wounds and an Associated Press reporter saw their bodies.

Police detain 20 in deadly Mexico prison riot

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexican authorities have detained 20 inmates for alleged involvement in a prison riot that killed 31 in a state bordering Texas and are investigating whether prison staff were also responsible. No prison officials had been dismissed so far over the fight in which one cell block invaded another Wednesday afternoon, causing a brawl among prisoners armed with makeshift knives, clubs and stones, said Morelos Canseco, interior secretary of Tamaulipas state. The fight at a penitentiary in the Gulf coast city of Altamira also injured 13 people.

Young Style

Ring in the New Year with a festive hat

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Traditionally, we usher out the old year and welcome in the new with the old Scots song, "Auld Lang Syne." At the stroke of midnight on Saturday, people gathered at parties to celebrate New Year's Eve will sing the song, even if they don't understand what the lyrics mean.

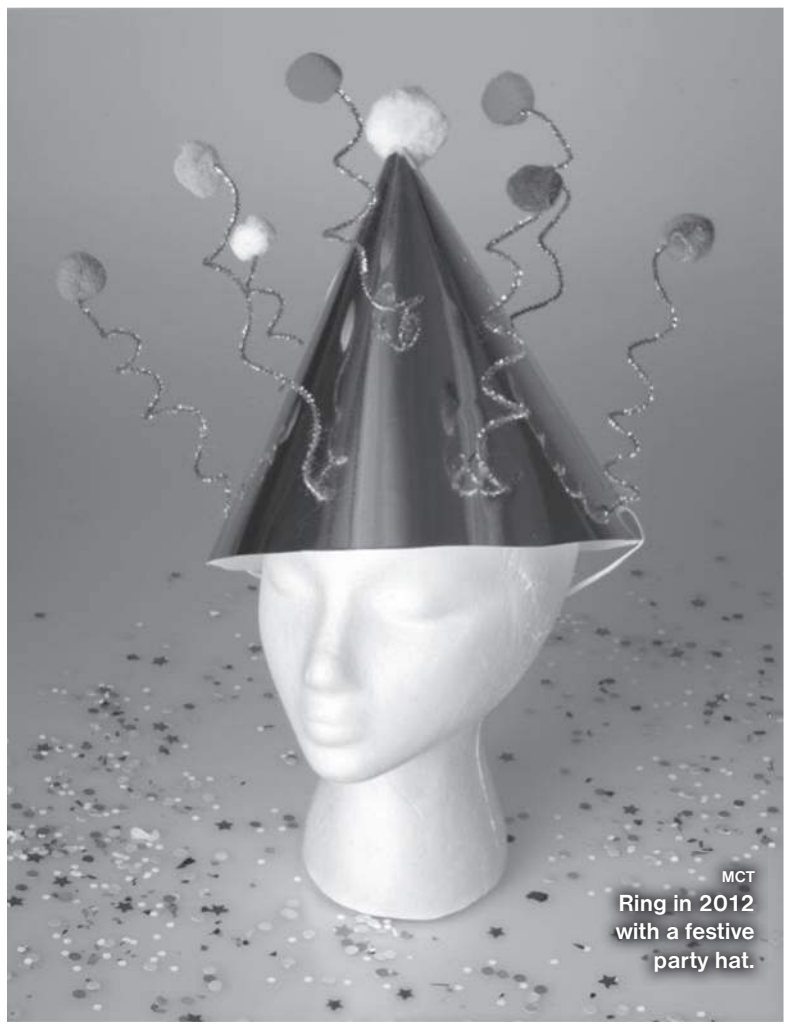
The title is an idiom (style of speaking peculiar to a group of people) meaning "long, long, ago." In the Scottish dialect, the words mean "old long ago," and are derived from an 18th-century poem by Robert Burns partially compiled from an older song. "Old Long Syne," printed in 1711 by James Watson, was set to the tune of an old folk song that predates the 16th century. In song and poetry, they all point to days gone by and advise that we should remember friendships and loves from the past.

Scots traditionally sang the song during their New Year's Eve celebration called Hogmanay and the tradition soon spread to nearby countries. As Scots, Welsh, Irish and English people emigrated around the world, they took the song and the tradition with them.

Remembering the song today seems fitting. After more than 12 years, this is my final Kids' Kraft column. I am putting away my sewing machine, closing down my craft room and dispensing with shelves filled with boxes of pipe cleaners and pompoms.

Thank you for sharing photos of your "creations," in your emails, phone calls and letters throughout the past dozen years. I have always enjoyed reading about your favorite projects. Hopefully, I have helped kids ages 6-12 express their creativity with the crafts we've shared.

But as they say, a closed door usually means a window opens somewhere else, and this is no exception. Not creating crafts each week will give me the opportunity to write about another one of my loves: the pets in our lives.


MCT
Ring in 2012 with a festive party hat.

There is no doubt that as Americans, we love our pets. We own more than 78 million dogs and 86 million cats, according to the Humane Society of the United States. Others own pot-bellied pigs, rabbits, ferrets, birds and any number of other creatures.

Please use the email address at the end of this column to tell me about your pets, events and other ideas you may want to share. I can't promise I can use them all, but I will enjoy hearing from you and will print as many as I am able.

For my final craft, I made a hat for First Night celebrations with just about the same supplies I used when I did my first Kids' Kraft column in 1999. To create those pompom critters, I used many of the same kinds of supplies that adorn this festive hat I found at one of my favorite online sources, Family Fun. You can see the directions online at http://familyfun.go.com/crafts/first-night-hats-661678/.

Supplies you will need:

- Metallic poster board.
- Scissors.
- Double-sided foam tape and duct tape.
- Pencil or pen.
- Thumbtack.
- Soft elastic thread.
- Pompoms, pipe cleaners and stickers.

To make a cone-shaped hat, cut a semi-circle with an 18-inch diameter from the poster board. Roll it into a cone, adjust its size to fit your head and secure it with double-sided foam tape.

To make a chin strap, use the thumbtack to poke a hole through each side of the hat near the bottom, thread one end of the elastic through each hole, and knot a few times to secure it.

To decorate your hat, coil pipe cleaners around a pencil or pen to make spirals. Attach the spirals by poking a hole through the hat with a thumbtack, Push one inch of the pipe cleaner through the hole to the inside of the hat and duct-tape it down. Attach pompoms with double-sided foam tape. Randomly place stickers.

Travel fund bank has global appeal

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Begin your global explorations by making a bank out of a quart jar to hold coins to finance your future travels.

James Michener, one of my favorite American authors, wrote the book, Tales of the South Pacific, that was adapted into the Broadway musical hit South Pacific. The American characters are sent to an island during World War II and meet people from different parts of the world. The song, "You've Got to be Carefully Taught," is about the Americans' struggles to overcome a lifetime of prejudice to accept the island people.

Although the story is a fictional account of clashing cultures, we face the same challenges today trying to overcome distrust of people who are different from us.

The United Nations was formed in 1945 because the world recognized the need to overcome such barriers. Its purpose is to maintain international peace and develop relations among nations, to cooperate in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.

On Sept. 27, the United Nations will sponsor World Tourism Day to encourage people to learn about each other through travel. By visiting other countries, we may be able to dispel the ignorance responsible for much of the prejudice in the world today.

The U.N. World Trade Organization is the leading international organization in the field of tourism, with 160 countries and territories represented. It plays a central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

This year, the WTO also takes on the challenge of combating climate change during a program that culminates in a global meeting in Peru this month. The program is a call to use travel to start grass-roots action to "promote sustainable tourism that reflects environmental, socioeconomic and climate responsiveness."

Begin your global explorations by making a bank to hold coins to finance your future travels using directions I found at http://www.michaels.com on the Web. Type "travel fund coin bank" in the search box.

Supplies you will need:

- 1 wide-mouth quart jar.
- Felt.
- Travel stickers.
- Mod Podge, or white glue mixed with water.
- Jute.
- Black paint pen.
- Scissors.
- Sponge brush.
- Pencil.

Remove the metal insert from the jar lid, and trace around it onto felt. Cut it out. Cut a slit in the center of the felt circle large enough to fit coins through. This will replace the metal insert.

Decorate the jar with stickers that represent countries you would like to visit someday.

Apply a light coat of Mod Podge over the jar, or mix white glue and water and apply with a sponge brush. Let dry.

Tie jute around the neck of the jar into a bow.

Use paint pens to personalize the jar as desired.

Recycled bottle a real doll

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

The calendar says it's spring, but it might be a while before the ground dries enough for you to take your ballgames out on soggy Northeast Ohio ballfields.

If there is one thing we can learn while waiting for the weather to catch up with the season, it's patience. There's absolutely no way to rush Mother Nature no matter how much you want to wear shorts and flip-flops.

Since it looks like there is still plenty of time before warmer weather is here to stay, perhaps it's time to turn off your computer game and television and turn on your creativity.

In honor of Earth Day on April 22, each week this month, I will bring you a craft that reminds you to practice the three rules of good ecology _ to reduce, reuse and recycle. We will reduce our trash by recycling and reusing something we would normally throw away and turn trash into treasures.

I used instructions that I found at http://jas.familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts?pageCraftDisplay&craftid11382/ to make a "String Bottle" doll with an old plastic water bottle and some yarn.

Supplies you will need:

- Clean plastic bottle (16 oz.)
- Wooden spoon.
- Yarn in assorted colors; 24 yards for a 10-inch-tall bottle.
- Scissors.
- Double-sided tape.
- Fine-tipped markers.
- 2 10 mm. wiggle eyes.
- Felt scraps, buttons, ribbons, lace etc., for decorations.
- Tacky glue.

Place four equally spaced strips of double-sided tape vertically up the sides of the bottle. Wrap double-sided tape horizontally around the bottom and the top edges of the bottle and around any contours where the yarn might slip.

Attach one end of the yarn near the bottom with double-sided tape. Working from the bottom up, wrap the entire bottle with yarn. Make the rows tight enough that you can't see the plastic, but not so snug that the yarn is stretched thin.

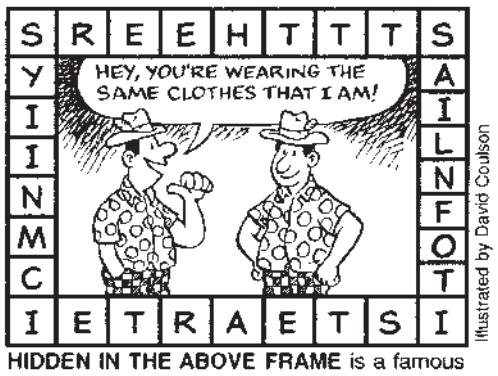
To change color, tie the ends off with a knot and snip off the dangling threads. When the entire bottle is covered, tie off the yarn at the neck.

Use felt scraps, buttons, ribbon or lace and glue on to decorate the body of your doll.

Glue the wiggle eyes to the back of the bowl of the spoon. Draw facial features with fine-tipped markers.

To make hair, decide how long you want it to be. Cut strands long enough to go over the top of the spoon and down the other side so both sides are even. Cut enough strands to make it as thick as you would like. Fold the strands in half to make a loop at the center and tie a small piece of yarn around the strands. Glue it to the top of the spoon at the tie. Snip off a few strands in the front for bangs.

Place the spoon inside the top of the bottle. If the bottle is top heavy, add a few beans or some rice in the bottom of the bottle.



Illustrated by David Coulson

HIDDEN IN THE ABOVE FRAME is a famous old saying. You can find it by reading every other letter as you go around it counterclockwise. The trick is finding the right first letter.

Answer: Starting with the second "I" on the left-hand rail: "Imitation is the sincerest flattery."

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

LET'S PLAY THE ANCIENT GAME OF "NIM"! This game goes back thousands of years and is usually played with coins, sticks, buttons, etc. To play, you lay out 15 coins in three rows of six, five and four. Each player, in turn, can remove one or more coins from any of the rows. He can even remove all the coins in a row if he wants to. Play goes back and forth until only one coin remains on the table. The player who is forced to remove this coin is the loser. While the rules are simple, you'll find that the game is a lot of fun.

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DON'T LET THIS ONE BOX YOU IN! Pictured below are two puzzle grids for you to fill in. Hints are given for each word. The words in grid A contain the same letters as the corresponding words in grid B.

1. A short distance.
2. Placed a bet.
3. Carries electricity.
4. Allows both genders.

GRID A

S			
	A		
		N	
			D

GRID B

P			
	I		
		L	
			E

1. Part of many families.
2. Found on radios.
3. Great river.
4. Secret signals.

Answers: 1. Step-pets. 2. Laid-dial. 3. Line-Nile. 4. Coed-code.

A DRIVE-IN DIVERSION! To solve this problem, you must replace the letters printed on the bag with the digits 0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9, so that you have a correct addition problem. The same letters get the same digits. Can you get a higher total than we did?

Our answer: C=9, A=0, R=2, H=8, O=7, P=4, F=1, D=6. (902 + 874 = 1776)

Strange BUT TRUE

by Samantha Weaver

■ It was 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who made the following sage observation: "One will rarely err if extreme actions be ascribed to vanity, ordinary actions to habit, and mean actions to fear."

■ Are you an agelast or an abderian? If you never laugh, you're the latter; if you laugh too much, you're the former.

■ There is one species of frog, found in the Southeast Asian country of Indonesia, that has no lungs; it breathes entirely through its skin.

■ You might be surprised to learn that the largest employer in the United States is the Department of Defense. Wal-Mart is No. 2, followed by the U.S. Postal Service.

■ Those who study such things say that as we age, a man's brain shrinks more rapidly than a woman's.

■ According to Tibetan tradition, a man must get permission from his lady love's maternal uncle before the couple can get married.

■ If you're in Florida and make a trip to the hair salon, keep in mind that in that state, it's illegal to fall asleep under a hair dryer. Both the client and the salon can be fined.

■ It seems that almost every little girl has a Barbie doll, but have you ever thought about what a life-size Barbie would look like? She would be 7 feet, 2 inches tall, weigh 125 pounds and have bust-waist-hip measurements of 40-22-36.

■ The white rhinoceros is not actually white. The "white" part of the name comes from the Afrikaans word "wijd," which means "wide"; it describes the animal's lips.

■ Iconic German-American actress Marlene Dietrich once said that her favorite meal was hot dogs and champagne.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "We all have strength enough to endure the misfortunes of others."—Francois de La Rochefoucauld

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MAGIC MAZE ● BOXING DAY

S A M T S I R H C C Z W U R P
M J H E C Z X O D U S Q N L J
G N E W Z E A L A N D E C Z X
V T E R P N L I J D A L Y H D
E C A H Y W V D L N T L B Y N
R P N S P A D A N A C A G E A
L K I G E E E Y C L R B U N L
B Z X W U L T S R T P T R O E
O M L S E L A S J O I O S M R
G E D B A Y X W T C W O U U I
T S G N I P P O H S T F I G A

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Australia, Canada, England, Football, Gifts, Holiday, Ireland, Money, New Zealand, Rugby, Sales, Scotland, Shopping, St. Stephen, Wales

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	÷		+		8
+		+		÷	
	−		÷		4
+		×		+	
	−		×		15
24		20		8	

1 2 4 4 5 6 7 8 9

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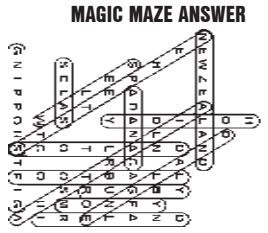
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

8	6	+	4	÷	8
4	2	÷	1	−	9
8	÷	6	+	4	×
2	+	5	×	3	−
16	−	4	×	2	+

Adopting dogs from puppy mills

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My family would like to adopt a shelter dog, and a recent news story about several dogs rescued from horrible conditions in a "puppy mill" facility really captured our hearts. However, the shelter caring for these dogs is not immediately putting them up for adoption, and it says there will be stricter requirements for those who want to adopt them. Why is this?—Karl in South Florida

DEAR KARL: Many shelter pets come with their own special set of behavioral quirks, often due to the stress and trauma of being abandoned at a shelter. But dogs (and cats and other pets) that suffer especially traumatic situations, such as abuse or starvation or neglect, can have a very difficult time adapting to home life.

Because of this, many shelters have developed special policies regarding these rescues. As you found, the puppy-mill dogs were not immediately put up for adoption; they're being treated and evaluated. Some may never be considered safe to adopt.

Once dogs are considered healthy enough to adopt, the shelter is following guidelines to make their transition to a new home as smooth as possible. For instance, it may not allow a puppy-mill rescue to go to a home that has kids under age 10. First-time pet owners will likely be discouraged or outright not allowed to adopt. Adopters may need to attend special classes, and the shelter may ask to make follow-up visits to the dog's new home.

Many rescues need a great deal of one-on-one attention, love and patience. If you're an experienced dog owner, meet the guidelines and are willing to take on the challenge of rehabilitating a rescued dog, go for it. But if you're not sure, then consider very carefully whether your family is ready to care for a rescued pet.

■ ■ ■

Send questions or tips to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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Step outside for healthy winter fun

Donna's Day Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson

"It's easy to stay inside and hibernate when January temps plummet and snow piles up," says Jennifer Manthey, a 32-year-old floral designer and mom of two. "My mom is always reminding me that even if it's cold, get outside!" So when Jennifer's 5-year-old daughter, Addie, enthusiastically asked to go to the Winter Festival at a frozen lake by their home on a recent Saturday, Jennifer couldn't resist.

A highlight of their adventure was strapping on snowshoes for a group hike. Addie already had learned the basics in gym class and willingly offered up tips. "After we take a few steps, we can run. But be careful, Mom," she said with confidence. "These are bigger than normal shoes!"

At the end of the trek, Jennifer was beaming when her young guide said, "Mom, you did great!" With the experience "under their feet," the idea snowballed into plans for a snowshoeing trip to explore the woods near a ski resort.

Are you feeling cooped up? Spending too much time in front of the TV watching how other people live? Here's a solution. Cut back on screen time, get outside and create your own adventures.

Here are easy ideas:

■ Make a snowball lamp by day and watch it a glow by night.

Make 40 to 50 firm snowballs in your front yard. Place 12 to 14 snowballs together in a ring shape. Place a votive or pillar candle in the middle of the ring. Add a second ring of 10 to 12 snowballs on top of the first. Continue making each ring slightly smaller until you run out of snowballs. Leave an opening at the top. At sunset, an adult can light the candle. Sip big mugs of hot chocolate as you enjoy your creation.

Note: An adult should be present when a candle is burning.

■ Groundhog Day is coming soon— Feb. 2. Folklore has it that the groundhog comes up from his hole looking for his shadow. If he sees it, bad weather is ahead. If there is no shadow, spring is on the way. The celebration is an excuse for shadow fun, such as playing shadow tag with one another.

Or, make shadow alphabet letters. Stand with your back to the sun and use your body to make a giant alphabet letter shadow. A simple letter I can be created with hand to the side and legs together. Spread your arms to make a "Y," then spread your arms and legs for an "X." Spell your name, your dog's name and your best friend's name.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Good Housekeeping

Aristotle perfect basil for the porch or patio

By NORMAN WINTER
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

If you have ever had even a fleeting thought on trying a little herb growing for own culinary creations then by all mean remember the name Aristotle. Aristotle is a relatively new compact basil that will thrill with both its ease at growing and its flavor in the kitchen.

Last week I wrote about the Tumbling Tom tomato and how vegetables were going compact or even in baskets for today's urban gardener. Well Aristotle Basil fits this theme perfectly. In a container or the landscape for that matter, it looks like a 12-inch dwarf evergreen shrub, at least until you brush the aromatic foliage with your hands. As the name might suggest many consider it a-fine Greek basil.

Whether you say "bay-zil" or "baa-zil," we can agree on one thing. Juicy tomato chunks mixed with olive oil, freshly torn basil and garlic spooned over hot pasta is a true feast.

Besides having extraordinary taste, basil is incredibly easy to grow. Aristotle is perfect for tucking into unused garden corners, displaying among vegetables, edging a flower garden or along a path where they gently release pungent anise aroma when brushed. Since it is a-smaller basil it makes a superb edging for the perennial border, or vegetable garden. But don't forget the container on the porch, patio or deck.

Basil asks for nothing more in the garden than full sun and well-drained soil. It grows quickly from seed but several varieties of transplants can be found in the herb section at your garden center. Basil thrives in during warm summer weather and excels in fall plantings as well.

Harvest basil just as the flower buds begin to form. The leaves contain the most concentrated oils and provide the best flavor and fragrance at this time. Once the plant begins to expend energy in flower and seed production, it loses some of its potency.

Cut or pinch basil just above a leaf or pair of leaves, removing no more than one fourth the plant. This leaves enough foliage to keep the plant healthy and looking good in the landscape.

MCT

The Aristotle basil is compact, mounding and flavorful, perfect for the porch or patio.

Simple air-drying produces tasty basil for use all winter. Rinse the leaves in cool water and gently shake off extra moisture. When thoroughly dry, tie a handful of stems firmly into a bundle. Place the bundle in a paper bag, gather the top of the bag around the stems and tie again.

Label, and hang the bag in a dry place where the temperature doesn't get above 80 degrees. After two to four weeks, the herbs should be dry and crumbly. Once basil is dried, store it in an airtight container in a cool, dark cupboard. Keep the leaves whole if possible to preserve the oils and crush or grind only when using them.

For the fullest flavor in the kitchen, add fresh basil to dishes within the last 5 or 10 minutes of cooking time. Use fresh in tomato dishes, soups, salads, sauces, and pasta. Its flavor blends well with other herbs like rosemary, oregano, thyme, and sage.

Look for basils and many other fresh herb transplants at your garden center. There are so many basils in the market place you may want to search out Aristotle via specialty seed catalogues and plant your own. For questions on herbs and other compact vegetables write to me at winter@naba.org.

Norman Winter is executive director of The National Butterfly Center in Mission, Texas, and author of Tough-as-Nails Flowers for the South *and* Captivating Combinations: Color and Style in the Garden. *Contact him at: winter@naba.org*

Roof maintenance

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: The last time I did an inspection of the outside of my house, I noticed a tree branch hanging over the roof gutter. My neighbor let me into his house upstairs to get a better look, and I saw that it was a fairly large branch. I don't think I can reach it safely as there is too much snow and ice around to climb up there. Should I just leave it until spring?—Chet C., Portland, Maine

A: It's up to you, really. If it's too dangerous to remove by yourself, contact a professional tree service and get a written estimate of how much it will cost for them to remove the limb. If the cost is too steep, you have the option of leaving it until the snow and ice thaw and then working with a friend to remove it.

But safety should always be a consideration. Even without snow and ice, the limb could be too heavy to move safely, or electrical wires could be nearby, or you may not have a ladder tall enough to access that part of the roof. Also, if the tree limb caused roof damage and a leak, there's little time to lose to clear the roof and fix the leak before more serious damage occurs. In those cases, the tree service is your best option.

HOME TIP: Ice dams forming along your gutters? Poor insulation or ventilation at the eaves may be your problem. An insulation installer can inspect and recommend a solution.

Send your questions or tips to ask@thisisahammer.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Mediterranean Angel Hair

Dotted with savory Mediterranean ingredients like olives, artichokes and Feta cheese, this low-calorie pasta dish is both filling and flavorful.

1/2 box uncooked Dreamfields Angel Hair
1 tablespoon olive oil
5 cloves garlic, chopped
2 anchovy filets (optional), mashed
1 can (14-ounce) artichoke hearts, drained, halved, patted dry
2 cups bell pepper strips (1/4-inch wide, assorted colors)
2 tablespoons capers (optional), rinsed and drained
1/4 cup pitted Kalamata olives, sliced lengthwise into quarters
1/2 cup reduced-sodium, fat free chicken broth
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano leaves
Feta cheese (plain or Mediterranean flavor), crumbled

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain; rinse in cold water or in ice water until completely cooled and drain well.

2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add garlic; stir to coat with oil. Cook about 1 minute to soften, stirring constantly. Stir in anchovies, if desired. Add artichokes; cook 2 to 3 minutes until heated through, stirring occasionally.

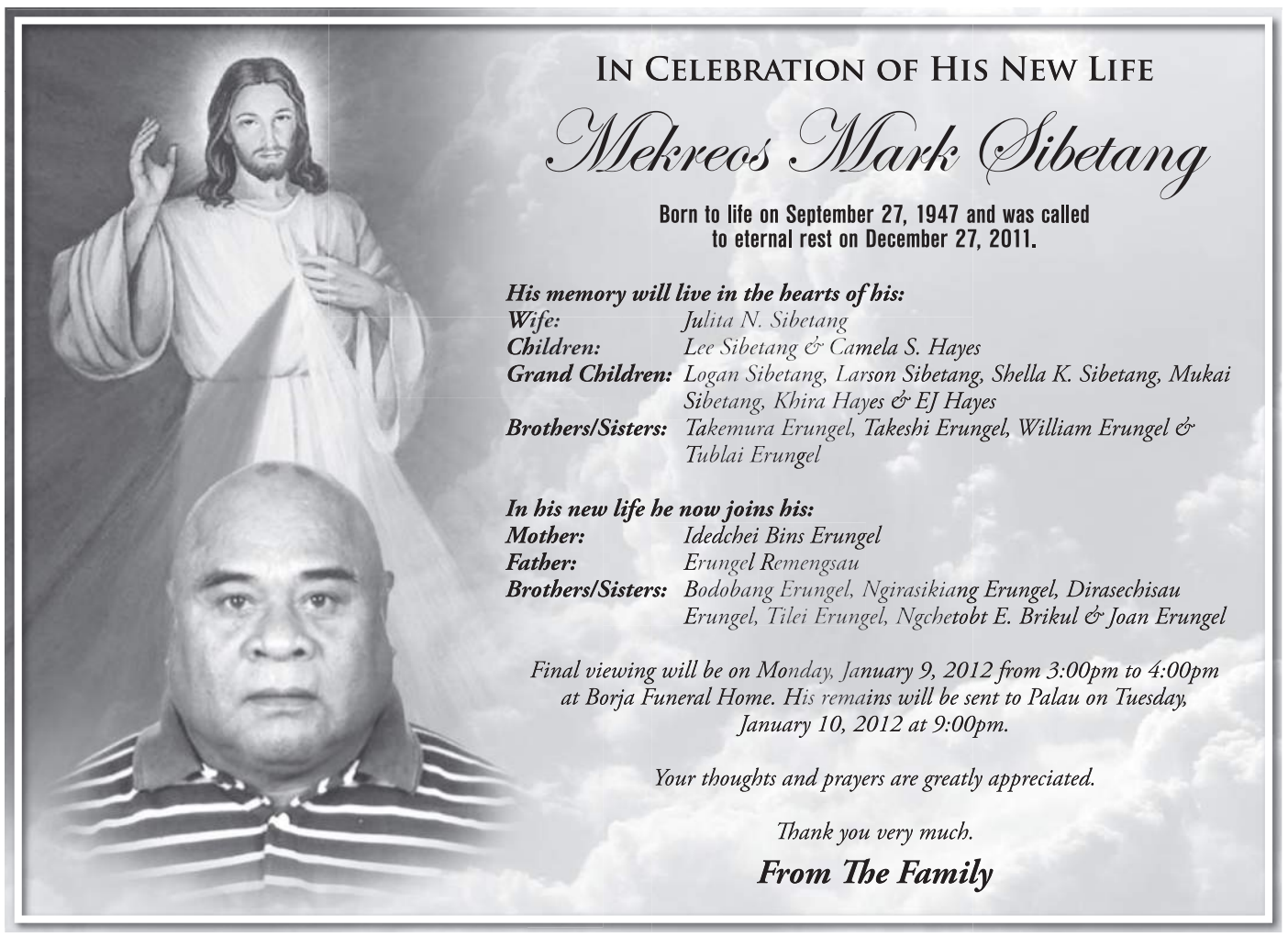
3. Add bell peppers and capers, if desired. Cook and stir about 2 minutes until peppers are just crisp-tender. Stir in olives.

4. Add broth and pasta to skillet. Toss and heat through until liquid is absorbed. Stir in thyme and oregano. Sprinkle with feta cheese, as desired. Serves 4.

■ Each serving: About 273 calories, 8g total fat (1g saturated), 0mg cholesterol, 650mg sodium, 15g* total carbs, 7g dietary fiber, 8g protein.

*If traditional pasta is used, there is a total of 45g carbohydrate.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/. *(c) 2012 Hearst Communications, Inc. All rights reserved*


In Celebration of His New Life
Mekreos Mark Sibetang
Born to life on September 27, 1947 and was called
to eternal rest on December 27, 2011.
His memory will live in the hearts of his:
Wife: Julita N. Sibetang
Children: Lee Sibetang & Camela S. Hayes
Grand Children: Logan Sibetang, Larson Sibetang, Shella K. Sibetang, Mukai Sibetang, Khira Hayes & EJ Hayes
Brothers/Sisters: Takemura Erungel, Takeshi Erungel, William Erungel & Tublai Erungel
In his new life he now joins his:
Mother: Idedchei Bins Erungel
Father: Erungel Remengsau
Brothers/Sisters: Bodobang Erungel, Ngirasikiang Erungel, Dirasechisau Erungel, Tilei Erungel, Ngchetobt E. Brikul & Joan Erungel
Final viewing will be on Monday, January 9, 2012 from 3:00pm to 4:00pm at Borja Funeral Home. His remains will be sent to Palau on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 9:00pm.
Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.
Thank you very much.
From The Family

Life & Style

Titanic items to be sold 100 years after sinking

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Items as small as a hairpin and as big as a chunk of the Titanic's hull are among 5,000 artifacts from the world's most famous shipwreck that are to be auctioned in April, close to the 100th anniversary of the disaster.

Nearly a century after the April 15, 1912, sinking of the ocean liner that hit an iceberg in the North Atlantic, a New York City auction is being readied by Guernsey's Auctioneers & Brokers.

That auction house has garnered headlines in the past by selling off such historical curiosities as prized Beatles photos, famous jewels of the late Princess Diana, beloved Jerry Garcia guitars and a police motorcycle used in the Texas motorcade when John F. Kennedy was slain. But nothing as titanic as the so-called Titanic collection.

On April 11, all of the salvaged items are to be sold as one lot in what Guernsey's President Arlan Ettinger describes as the most significant auction ever handled by that house.

"Who on this planet doesn't know the story of the Titanic and isn't fascinated by it?" he asked. "Could Hollywood have scripted a more tragic or goose-bump-raising story than what actually happened on that ship?"

AP

This 1998 image provided by RMS Titanic, Inc., shows a 17-ton portion of the hull of the RMS Titanic as it is lifted to the surface during an expedition to the site of the tragedy. The piece along with 5,000 other artifacts will be auctioned as a single collection on April 11, 2012 100 years after the sinking of the ship.

"It is as poignant to my 12-year-old son as it is to me and generations before me. There's no end to the fascination about it."

The auction will be conducted 100 years plus a day after the Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, embarking on the ill-fated maiden voyage that had New York as its destination.

The collection was appraised in 2007 at $189 million, including some intellectual property alongside the myriad items plucked by remote controlled probes from the pitch-black depths, some 2 and 1/2 miles below the ocean's surface.

Those artifacts include the massive hull section called "The Big Piece" as well as personal belongings of passengers and crew, such as a mesh purse and eyeglasses. A bronze cherub that once adorned the Grand Staircase is also among the collection, as are fine china, table settings, bottles and ship fittings—even the stand upon which the ship's wheel stood.

By court order, the items cannot be sold individually and must go to a buyer who agrees to properly maintain the collection and make it available for occasional public viewing. The sale is subject to court approval.

Ettinger and officials with RMS Titanic Inc., which salvaged the artifacts from the Titanic wreck, spoke to The Associated Press in advance of a media preview Thursday in New York. The AP first reported on the auction Dec. 29, based on financial filings by RMS Titanic.

The planned sale also could include a trove of archaeological data and visuals of the wreck, as well as the only detailed map of the vast ocean floor where all the artifacts were scattered after the Titanic's sinking.

The Titanic's sinking claimed the lives of more than 1,500 of the 2,228 passengers and crew. An international team led by oceanographer Robert Ballard located the wreckage in 1985, about 400 miles off Newfoundland, Canada. The research materials could be a road map to learn more about the wreck and the wreck site, how the ship sank, why it sank and serve as the foundation for a full archaeological survey of the site.

"We are opening the door of opportunity for the future of the Titanic," said Brian Wainger, a spokesman for Atlanta-based Premier Exhibitions Inc., of which RMS Titanic is a division.

But the clock is ticking on thousands of additional artifacts embedded in a 3-by-5-mile section of ocean floor around the wreck, an area subject to a century of extreme ocean conditions such as cold temperatures and treacherous currents.

"I think it's fair to say that we have only touched the surface," Wainger said.

The deteriorating hulk of the Titanic is off limits to salvage.

The auction is subject to approval by a federal judge in Virginia whose jurisdiction for years has given oversight to legal issues governing the salvage of the Titanic. The Titanic treasures were amassed during seven risky and expensive trips to the wreck.

'Descendants,' 'Bridesmaids' earn writers noms

LOS ANGELES (AP)—George Clooney's "The Descendants," Brad Pitt's "Moneyball," Kristen Wiig's "Bridesmaids" and Woody Allen's "Midnight in Paris" are among nominees for the Writers Guild of America Awards.

Clooney's family drama "The Descendants" earned an adapted-screenplay nomination Thursday for director Alexander Payne and co-writers Nat Faxon and Jim Rash. Pitt's sports tale "Moneyball" is up for the same prize for writers Steven Zaillian and Aaron Sorkin.

Zaillian has a second adapted-screenplay nomination for director David Fincher's thriller "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo," starring Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara.

"Bridesmaids" star Wiig shared an original-screenplay nomination for her wedding comedy, which she co-wrote with Annie Mumolo. Director Allen also was nominated for original screenplay for his romantic fantasy "Midnight in Paris."

Other contenders for original screenplay: Will Reiser for the cancer story "50/50," starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Seth Rogen; Tom McCarthy for the family tale "Win Win," featuring Paul Giamatti; and Diablo Cody for the dark comedy "Young Adult," with Charlize Theron.

Also nominated for adapted screenplay: writer-director Tate Taylor for the Deep South drama "The Help," with Viola Davis, Emma Stone and Octavia Spencer; and John Logan for filmmaker Martin Scorsese's Paris adventure "Hugo," featuring Ben Kingsley and child stars Chloe Grace Moretz and Asa Butterfield.

Some acclaimed films, including the silent movie "The Artist," were ineligible because they were not made under the guild's contract guidelines.

Nominated for documentary screenplay: Katie Galloway and Kelly Duane de la Vega, "Better This World"; Marshall Curry and Matthew Hamachek, "If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front"; Patricio Guzman, "Nostalgia for the Light"; Wim Wenders, "Pina"; Hetty Naaijkens-Retel Helmrich and Leonard Retel Helmrich, "Position Among the Stars"; and Manish Pandey, "Senna."

Honors from Hollywood trade groups such as the writers, actors and directors guilds help sort out likely contenders for the Academy Awards, whose nominations come out Jan. 24.

Writers Guild winners will be announced Feb. 19.

Probing what Hollywood told about bin Laden raid

WASHINGTON (AP)—Investigators are probing whether the Obama administration divulged too many details of the secret raid on Osama bin Laden to Hollywood filmmakers.

Rep. Peter King, who heads the House Homeland Security Committee, has questioned how much information was shared about the U.S. special operations mission in Pakistan that killed the al-Qaida leader in May. King on Thursday released a December letter from the Pentagon saying that the inspector general's office covering intelligence matters "will address actions taken by Department of Defense personnel related to the release of information to the filmmakers."

King, R-N.Y., also released a November letter from the CIA saying that its office of public affairs was developing a "single point of reference that will govern future interactions with the entertainment industry."

King has expressed worries about the administration's cooperation with Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc. and Kathryn Bigelow, director of the Oscar-winning picture "The Hurt Locker," who is working on a movie about the hunt for bin Laden. In August King wrote the inspectors general of the Pentagon and CIA noting a New York Times column saying that Sony and Bigelow had been given "top-level access to the most classified mission in history."

In his letter, King said that leaks of classified information related to the bin Laden raid had already resulted in the arrests of Pakistanis believed by Pakistan authorities to have assisted the CIA. Participation by the Pentagon and the CIA in making a film about the raid "is bound to increase such leaks, and undermine these organizations' hard-won reputations as `quiet professionals,'" King said.

He sought information on talks among the White House, the Pentagon and the CIA about providing Hollywood executives with access to covert military operators and asked whether the film would be submitted to the military and the CIA for pre-publication review.

White House press secretary Jay Carney, asked in August about King's call for an investigation, said claims that the White House had given out classified information were false and that the most specific information the White House had released about the raid came from his daily briefings.

In a statement late Thursday, CIA spokeswoman Jennifer Youngblood said, "CIA has been open that as part of our public outreach, the agency has over the years engaged with writers, documentary filmmakers, movie and TV producers, and others in the entertainment industry.

"Our goal is an accurate portrayal of the men and women of the CIA, their vital mission and the commitment to public service that defines them," Youngblood added. "And it is an absolute that the protection of national security equities is an integral part of our mission."

'Cable Guy' tours country for History Channel

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Funny man Dan Whitney, the Blue Collar Comedy crew member known as "Larry the Cable Guy," says Louisiana and Alaska are among the states that gave him great fodder for the second season of his History Channel show "Only in America with Larry the Cable Guy," which premieres Jan. 11.

The show takes quirky and humorous approaches to interesting people and places across the country. Season two opens with Whitney's venture to the Alaska frontier, where he goes on a stakeout with authorities to catch illegal moose hunters, learns some moose calls and helps one of the state's top moose scientists with an experiment.

Whitney

Whitney said he also made an unannounced visit to the home of former Alaska governor and 2008 Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin.

"She was a good sport," Whitney said with a laugh. "She didn't shoot me or anything."

Whitney said he made repeat visits to Louisiana to tape segments for his show because "there are so many interesting things to do there."

During a trip to New Orleans a few months ago, he met with a voodoo priest, ate beignets at Cafe du Monde in the French Quarter, helped decorate a Mardi Gras float and marched in a street parade. He returned to Louisiana in December for a nutria hunting expedition in a south Louisiana swamp.

"I didn't even know what a nutria was," said the Kentucky native who now lives in Florida. "My show tries to be funny but informative too. We talk about why it's important to get rid of the nutria, how they're doing a lot of damage down there."

The nutria is a rodent native to South America that is believed to have been accidentally introduced into coastal Louisiana in the 1930s. It wreaks havoc on the state's fragile wetlands by devouring the roots of erosion-stopping marsh plants. They also damage banks and levees by burrowing. Louisiana holds periodic nutria hunts in which hunters turn in tails as proof of a kill.

Whitney said he addresses those subjects in his show and even gets a taste of some fried nutria meat.

"It was kind of like eating rabbit," he said. "It's a little gamey, but it's not that bad."

Whitney has been to about 65 cities for the taping of the show's two seasons. Season two premieres Jan. 11 at 9 p.m. EST on the History Channel and includes stops in more than a dozen states, among them Florida, New York, Maryland, Colorado, Virginia, Georgia and Ohio.

The Blue Collar Comedy troupe—formed more than a decade ago—includes comedians Whitney, Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Engvall and Ron White.

First lady makes appearance on 'iCarly'

NEW YORK (AP)—Teen star Miranda Cosgrove says she doesn't usually get nervous about taping episodes of her Nickelodeon comedy, "iCarly," but that changed when first lady Michelle Obama taped an appearance on the show.

"I've been doing the show for a long time and I usually don't get nervous, but having the first lady on the set, I was really nervous," laughed Cosgrove, 18, in an interview Wednesday.

Nickelodeon and the White House want to show support for U.S. military families with a cameo by the first lady on the show.

On "iCarly," Cosgrove plays Carly Shay, the daughter of an Air Force colonel who is serving overseas.

In an episode titled, "iMeet the First Lady," Carly gets upset when her father's return from active duty is canceled because he is deployed again. Her friends decide to surprise her with a live feed to her father during an iCarly webcast. After Mrs. Obama sees the webcast, she praises Carly for being such a supportive daughter to a father who is serving his country.

AP

In this April 2, 2011 file photo, entertainer Nick Cannon arrives at Nickelodeon's 24th Annual Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles.

Cosgrove said that despite being nervous about meeting Mrs. Obama, she found her quite approachable, calling the first lady a "nice, pretty normal person" who even danced with the cast during a regular segment called "Random Dancing."

"It was probably the most fun thing we did. We all just got to let loose and have a good time," Cosgrove said.

To promote the show, cast members will appear at four screening events for military families. The screenings will be held in Miramar, Calif., on Jan. 9; Groton, Conn., on Jan. 11; Fort Dix, N.J., on Jan. 12; and Alexandria, Va., on Jan. 13.

Cosgrove said the goal is to "let (military) kids know how important their parents are."

The episode of "iCarly" featuring the first lady will air Jan. 16 on Nickelodeon at 7:30 p.m. EST.

Former Kate Middleton chooses her charities

LONDON (AP)—She's married into the royal family, and now the former Kate Middleton is moving to define her new role by choosing the charities she will support.

The Duchess of Cambridge has accepted honorary positions with charities that deal with a range of issues, including tackling drug addiction and helping young people, St. James's Palace said Thursday.

The palace said the positions reflect her "personal interests in the arts, the promotion of outdoor activity, and supporting people who are in need of all ages, especially young children."

The royal, who married Prince William in a gala ceremony last year, became a patron of Action on Addiction and the National Portrait Gallery. She has also become a royal patron of East Anglia's Children's Hospices and The Art Room, and a volunteer with the Scout Association.

Patronage raises the profile of the charities the royals support—bringing attention to their causes. It is also considered important to the members of the royal family, because their support shows their commitment to worthy causes.

"The duchess has chosen to support organizations that complement the charitable work already undertaken by her husband," the palace said in a statement.

The late Princess Diana, mother to Prince William, was active in supporting numerous charities, and worked with organizations to help AIDS patients and remove land mines from conflict zones.

Nick Cannon moved from Aspen to LA hospital

NEW YORK (AP)—Nick Cannon has been transferred to a Los Angeles hospital to continue treatment for "mild kidney failure."

His representative says the 31-year-old Cannon was moved Wednesday after receiving treatment in Aspen, Colo., where the TV personality and his wife, Mariah Carey, had been vacationing.

Carey has been by Cannon's side. Earlier this week, she tweeted that he is suffering from "mild kidney failure" and posted a photo on her website of the couple as they lay in a hospital bed in Aspen.

She is asking fans to "Please keep Nick in your thoughts."

Cannon's representative had no further details Thursday about his condition.

In this April 2, 2011 file photo, entertainer Nick Cannon arrives at Nickelodeon's 24th Annual Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles. AP

Etta James released from hospital, manager says

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Etta James' longtime friend and manager says the singer has been released from a Southern California hospital and is back at home with her family.

Lupe De Leon says James was released Thursday afternoon, just a few days after the terminally ill singer's condition improved enough for her to be removed from a breathing machine.

The "At Last" singer had been hospitalized since before Christmas after she experienced difficulty breathing. James has been diagnosed with terminal leukemia, and she is also suffering from dementia.

James

She has been receiving mostly at-home care.

De Leon says James, who lives east of Los Angeles in Riverside County, is stable and is with her husband and other family members.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Pa. man sues Khalifa for $2.3M over hit song

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A Pittsburgh rapper is suing hip hop star Wiz Khalifa for $2.3 million over allegations that he stole the hit song "Black and Yellow." Max Warren performs under the stage name Maxamillion. He says Khalifa's chart-topper "Black and Yellow" was lifted from his own song "Pink N Yellow." Warren says he copyrighted "Pink N Yellow" in 2008 and Khalifa copyrighted "Black and Yellow" in 2011. The copyright infringement lawsuit was filed in federal court in Philadelphia and seeks at least $2.3 million in damages. It names Khalifa, whose real name is Cameron Jibril Thomaz, two other songwriters and several record companies and music publishers. Warren's lawyer declined to comment Thursday. A spokesman for Khalifa at Atlantic Records didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

More than 200 million watched NFL this season

NEW YORK (AP)—More than 200 million viewers saw NFL games this season, with an average of 17.5 million per game. According to The Nielsen Company, it was the NFL's second-highest viewership average since 1989, behind only last season (17.9 million). NFL games accounted for 23 of the 25 most-watched TV shows among all programming. The 16 most-viewed shows on cable TV were NFL games. A record 37 NFL telecasts averaged at least 20 million viewers, topping the previous mark set in 2010 of 35. Fox matched 2010 for its most-watched season, while NFL Network's Thursday night telecasts were its most watched. NBC's Sunday night football was the most-watched show in primetime for the second consecutive fall. ESPN's Monday night package was cable's most-watched program for the sixth season in a row. CBS had its second most-watched season carrying the AFC.

Daughter bears the burden of her parents' unhappiness

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: A few days ago, my mom told me that if it wasn't for me, she and my dad would be divorced. She also said that the last few years with my dad have been terrible. I feel so guilty about this, knowing that I'm the reason my parents are unhappy.

I barely slept the night my mom told me this, but actually, it all makes sense. Now I know why my parents yell at me for no reason and why I get in trouble for no reason. Abby, please help me. How do I tell my mom how it made me feel?

FEELS GUILTY IN GEORGIA

DEAR FEELS GUILTY: Your mother was wrong to say that you are the only reason she and your father have stayed married. They are together for reasons of their own that have little or nothing to do with you. You are not responsible for their unhappiness.

Your parents appear to be under a lot of pressure right now, which may be why their tempers are frayed. Before discussing this with your mother, it might help to talk about what happened with another adult relative you trust. However, if there is no one else, clip this letter, show it to your mother and tell her you wrote it.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 20-year-old woman with a problem I'm not sure how to solve. I am 30 pounds overweight (I have been heavyset my whole life). My mom and I have been walking together for years, talking and enjoying each other's company as we go.

For a while, we were both losing weight consistently as a result of our walks. But since my parents' divorce three years ago, Mom has had to work full-time and isn't able to walk with me as often.

I want to continue walking to lose weight so I can be healthier and feel better about myself. But I feel I will be betraying my mom by not including her. Walking together has been our tradition, so I don't know how she'll feel if I continue to walk without her. What should I do?

STEPPING LIGHTLY

DEAR STEPPING LIGHTLY: Get out there and continue walking—with headphones or with friends. Exercise with your mother on weekends if she's available, and encourage her to do some walking on her own during her lunch hour. The only thing you should NOT do is quit walking because you feel guilty that you and your mother are now on different "paths."

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to "Daryl" for 10 years. He has never really hit the mark in what I want—someone who is mature, stable, predictable and has an appropriate perspective on life. Daryl depends on the outside world to make him feel good about himself, and when that doesn't happen, he drinks and smokes pot.

I love exercise and the outdoors. He doesn't like hiking. In fact, he's afraid to challenge himself physically in even the smallest way.

I have to decide whether to stay and "make do" or move on. How do I make that choice? (I'm over 40.)

LOOKING FOR BETTER, LAGUNA HILLS, CALIF.

DEAR LOOKING: Tell your husband what you have told me. That will give him a chance to shape up and at least try to be more of the man you thought you married. (I'm giving you the benefit of the doubt and not assuming you felt you were compromising when you accepted his proposal.) Daryl deserves to spend his life with someone who values him for who he is, not someone who feels she's "making do." If it doesn't work, then you should BOTH move on.

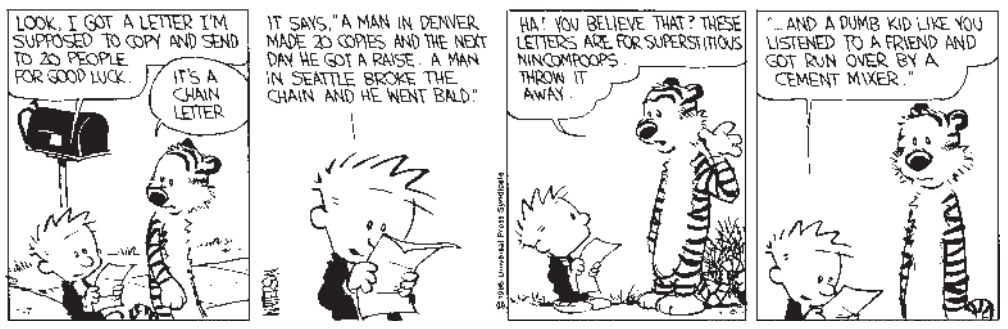
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

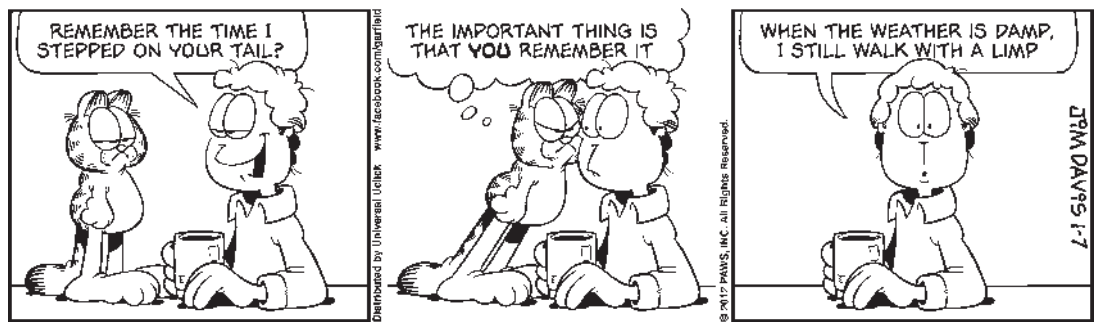
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


LOOK, I GOT A LETTER I'M SUPPOSED TO COPY AND SEND TO 20 PEOPLE FOR GOOD LUCK.
IT'S A CHAIN LETTER
IT SAYS, "A MAN IN DENVER MADE 20 COPIES AND THE NEXT DAY HE GOT A RAISE. A MAN IN SEATTLE BROKE THE CHAIN AND HE WENT BALD."
HA! YOU BELIEVE THAT? THESE LETTERS ARE FOR SUPERSTITIOUS NINCOMPOOPS. THROW IT AWAY.
"...AND A DUMB KID LIKE YOU LISTENED TO A FRIEND AND GOT RUN OVER BY A CEMENT MIXER."

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


REMEMBER THE TIME I STEPPED ON YOUR TAIL?
THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU REMEMBER IT
WHEN THE WEATHER IS DAMP, I STILL WALK WITH A LIMP
JIM DAVIS 1-7

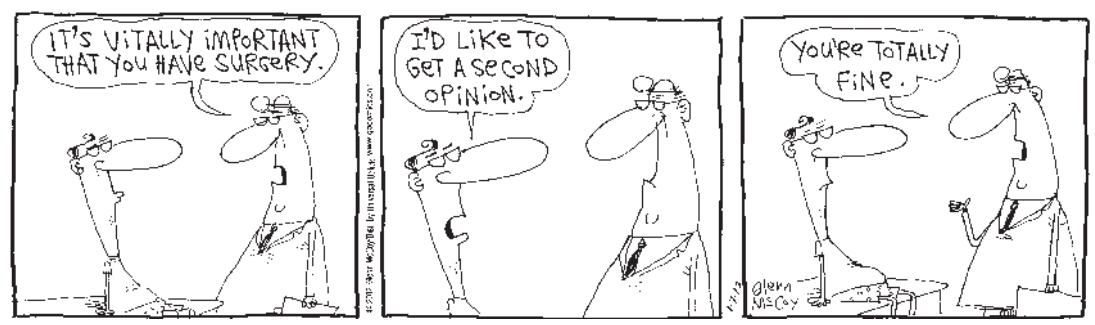
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I JUST GOT A JOB AT THE COFFEESHOP!
ADAM, WE DISCUSSED THIS, YOU'LL DRINK ALL YOUR WAGES.
NOT A JOB WITH THE COFFEESHOP, A JOB FROM SOMEONE I MET THERE.
REALLY? WHAT IS IT?
I'M WRITING A DUDE'S MEMOIRS FOR HIS GRANDKIDS.
WOW. THAT'S ACTUALLY RIGHT UP YOUR ALLEY.
UP MY ALLEY, THEN UP MY DRIVEWAY AND SERVED ON A PLATE.
GREAT. I DON'T NEED TO COOK TONIGHT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

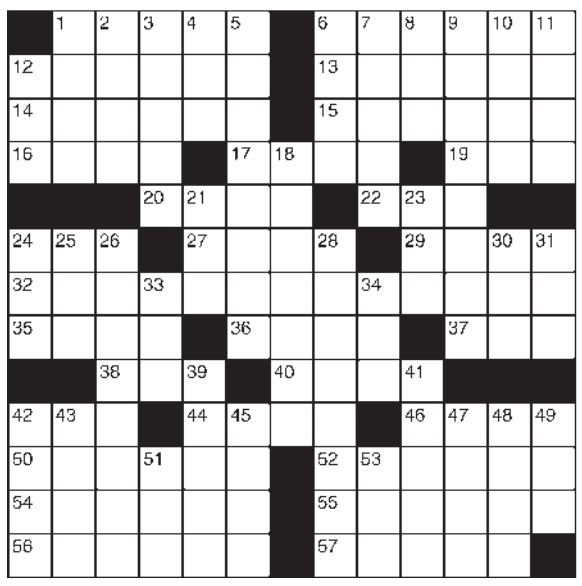
ACROSS
1 Blasting caps' adjuncts
6 Bear witness
12 Fall
13 Painting on plaster
14 Fall
15 Deep-seated ill will
16 Golfer's option
17 Acknowledge
19 Shock and —
20 Green Hornet's assistant
22 Once around
24 "Of course"
27 Nutritional bean
29 Prejudice
32 Something you didn't like at first
35 Serve tea
36 Tom Cruise's daughter
37 Tex- —
38 Sprite
40 Skaters' mecca
42 "Hail!"
44 Actress Kudrow
46 Apiece
50 Starts eating
52 One of the clefs
54 Intensify
55 Between the foul lines
56 Talks a blue streak?
57 Did pre-heist recon

DOWN
1 Quartet
2 Busy with
3 Mettle
4 Shade provider
5 D.C. 100
6 Frizzy hairdo
7 Fishing net
8 X rating?
9 Entertainment providing a mental diversion
10 Garbage boat
11 Rent
12 Mai —
18 Peeping Toms
21 "— was saying, ..."
23 "The — Daba Honeymoon"
24 Shrill bark
25 Author Umberto
26 Window washer's tool
28 Arm of the Mediterranean
30 Chowed down
31 Driver's license datum
33 Web address
34 Stannum
39 Pamphlet
41 Retains
42 Tacks on
43 Opinion
45 Hostels
47 Competent
48 Dressed
49 "Yo!"
51 Masseur's workplace
53 Genetic stuff

Solution time: 27 mins.

A	S	S	■	S	P	A	R	■	D	O	P	E
C	O	O	■	P	A	L	O	■	I	R	O	N
H	Y	P	N	O	T	I	C	■	S	E	E	D
Y	A	H	O	O	S	■	K	F	C	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	K	Y	■	E	R	O	T	I	C
H	I	V	E	S	■	S	I	Y	■	A	N	A
I	B	I	S	■	M	A	S	■	P	R	O	P
D	E	N	■	W	A	X	■	L	L	A	N	O
E	X	O	T	I	C	■	M	Y	A	■	■	■
■	■	■	E	T	A	■	A	N	N	A	L	S
H	O	A	X	■	Q	U	I	X	O	T	I	C
E	D	N	A	■	U	T	N	E	■	O	V	A
M	E	N	S	■	E	A	T	S	■	Z	E	N

Yesterday's answer 1-7



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jeremy Renner, 41; Nicolas Cage, 48; Katie Couric, 55; David Caruso, 56.

Happy Birthday: Find new and innovative ways to get things done. It's taking the initiative to strive for better results that will separate you from the competition. Combine your knowledge, skills and abilities to cultivate a winning idea that will help you maintain your status quo. Your numbers are 4, 18, 21, 25, 33, 38, 49.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Help is on the way. Travel, knowledge and discussing necessary changes will have a positive effect on what you are trying to accomplish. Romance is highlighted, and plans for an evening of fun should be your intent. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You'll be tempted to take on too much and overreact under pressure. Consider whom you can call in to help you out. Being responsible will make a lasting impression on someone who doubted you in the past. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can accomplish whatever you set your mind to. Send out your resume or apply for a position that interests you. Expanding your horizons will lead to positive challenges and greater earning potential. Don't get mad over money matters, get moving. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll be sensitive to what other do and say. Keep your thoughts to yourself. The more you do around home to add to your comfort or to ease your stress, the easier it will be to move forward. Take the initiative and take action. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Someone will try to steer you in a questionable direction. If you don't like what's transpiring, take a pass. Going it alone will bring far better results and allow you to maintain complete control. Believe in your abilities and press on. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You can learn from your experiences and benefit from the people you encounter. Getting out and participating in your community will open your eyes to new possibilities. Your contribution will lead to an opportunity to further your personal goals. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Think before you say something you may regret. It's better to listen before you divulge your own plans. Taking care of your own needs or doing something that will add to your physical appearance will boost your confidence. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You will show greater stability and self-confidence when dealing with people who can influence your future. Network as much as possible to make a name for yourself. Promote a project you've been working on and you will get a good response. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Be true to your word. You can stabilize your personal life if you sort out differences with someone who can affect your future. Romance will develop spontaneously and bring greater vision to your personal plans. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You can change the dynamics of your life. Check out professional possibilities that interest you. Advancement is in the stars if you make phone calls, set up interviews or find a way to supplement your income with a service you can offer. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Love, romance and socializing should all be scheduled into your plans for the day. A financially friendly agreement with someone will make both your lives less stressful. A creative idea will pay off. A contract can be signed. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Be careful how you word what you want to say, especially if dealing with personal issues that will affect a relationship you have with someone. Better to keep a secret than to hurt someone's feelings. An emotional argument is apparent. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, appealing and entertaining. You demand attention and get it.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		2		6		1		
				8				
9			3		4			7
		7				8		
6	5			1			7	2
		9				4		
2			5		7			1
				2				
		8		3		9		

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/07

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	8	3	4	2	9	1	6	7
6	4	7	8	3	1	2	9	5
1	2	9	5	7	6	3	8	4
9	7	5	3	4	8	6	1	2
4	3	1	9	6	2	5	7	8
8	6	2	1	5	7	9	4	3
3	5	8	6	1	4	7	2	9
7	1	4	2	9	3	8	5	6
2	9	6	7	8	5	4	3	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/06

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PRINCE IS TOURING AGAIN **Solution: 8 letters**

N	S	V	H	L	Y	R	I	C	S	K	I	S	S	C
N	I	N	E	T	Y	N	I	N	E	N	O	R	T	D
H	N	A	R	L	R	S	V	P	V	U	L	E	A	D
O	G	A	R	R	O	A	S	L	O	F	R	N	R	S
J	P	K	L	E	D	U	E	A	D	E	C	U	T	T
N	A	I	A	T	L	E	R	Y	B	E	M	E	E	V
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L	S	Y	M	B	O	L	I	V	E	I	C	Ⓖ	E	A
O	E	A	P	X	O	S	M	U	B	L	A	U	S	R
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E	A	S	Y	N	T	H	E	S	I	Z	E	R	O	A
R	A	I	N	B	O	W	C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N

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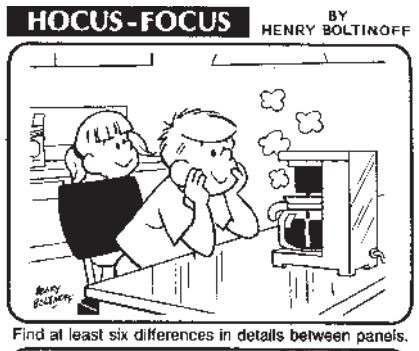
Albums, Auctioned, Bass, Batman, Bold, Dance, Doves, Drums, Earth, Encores, Folk, Funk, Gold, John, Kiss, Lead, Live, Lyrics, Musical, Nineteen, Ninety-Nine, Parade, Party, Piano, Planet, Play, Purple Rain, Rainbow Children, Raspberry Beret, Red, Revolution, Saxophone, Sing, Symbol, Synthesizer, Tickets, Tika, Time, Vegetarian, Velour, Writer

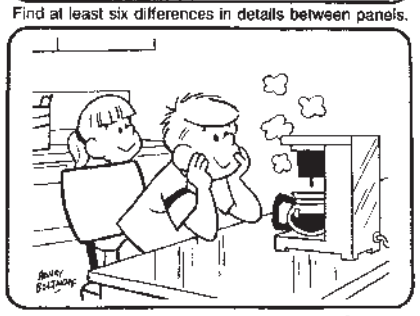
Yesterday's Answer: Apple Cider

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Girl has a ponytail. 2. Shirt has a stripe. 3. Chair is different. 4. Coffee pot is different. 5. Cabinet is missing. 6. Box on counter is different.

Wishing Well®

3	2	4	6	7	4	3	7	6	4	5	7	5
S	F	P	S	A	R	U	T	U	O	L	T	O
6	4	5	6	2	5	4	7	3	2	3	5	8
C	C	V	C	O	E	E	E	C	C	C	A	B
7	2	5	3	7	6	7	6	5	7	8	2	4
N	U	B	E	D	E	T	S	O	O	E	S	E
6	8	4	8	3	7	5	6	4	8	6	2	3
S	F	D	L	S	O	U	H	U	E	A	E	S
7	8	7	3	2	6	2	6	7	2	7	4	3
T	X	H	U	N	S	E	T	E	R	R	N	P
5	6	3	8	4	8	5	7	4	8	5	6	2
N	E	H	I	A	B	D	S	F	L	S	N	G
4	8	4	6	2	3	6	4	2	3	2	4	3
R	E	A	E	I	E	D	I	E	L	S	D	D

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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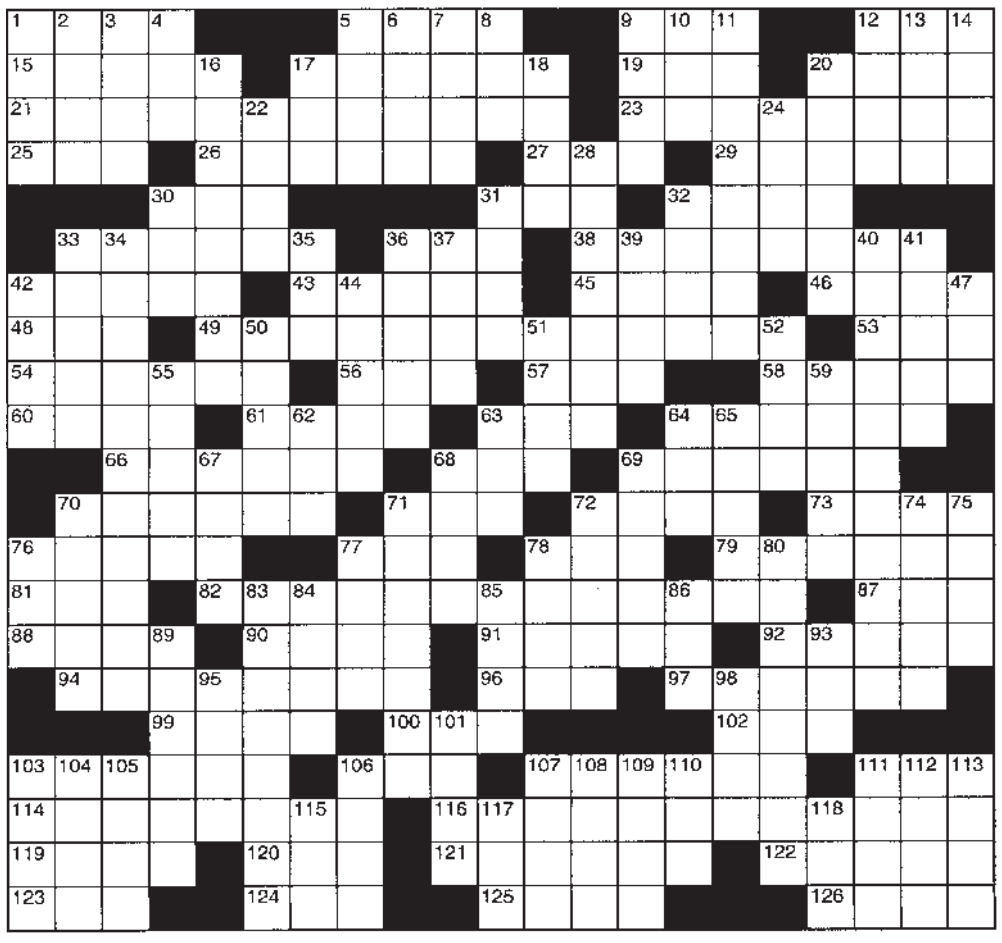
Super Crossword PUNBLICATIONS

ACROSS
1 Move like a mouse
5 Neighbor of Java
9 "— Medicine" ('88 hit)
12 Corpulent
15 Early computer
17 TV's "— Heroes"
19 Campbell of UB40
20 Poorly
21 Restaurant critic's zine?
23 Librarian's journal?
25 Explosive initials
26 Column
27 Max — Sydow
29 Bunch of ballplayers
30 Solidify
31 Weber's "— Freischutz"
32 Prepared to drive
33 Let up
36 Arthur or Pons
38 — carrier
42 Snapshot
43 — Lama
45 Strained
46 DEA officer
48 Browning's bedtime?
49 Gardener's monthly?
53 — -jongg
54 Hymns of praise
56 Viper
57 Milne creature
58 Digression
60 Gouda alternative
61 — River, NJ
63 Tenor Peerce
64 Like Simon
66 Groovy Austin
68 Pugilistic poke
69 Stephen King book
70 Mutiny
71 Produce a parka
72 — fide
73 Byzantine art form
76 Pants parts
77 Ram's ma'am
78 Directional suffix
79 Sock style
81 Feign
82 Tree surgeon's periodical?
87 Middling mark
88 Whippet's wagger
90 Enormous
91 Terpsichore's sister
92 104 Down, e.g.
94 Broadway arrangement
96 Kennel feature
97 Kitten gear?
99 Petite pie
100 Sprite
102 "— Buttermilk Sky" ('46 song)
103 Classify
106 Maestro de Waart
107 "Electric —" ('83 hit)
111 To and —
114 Sailor's reading?
116 Depression era magazine?
119 Icelandic epic
120 Capek play
121 Bring to light
122 Goatish gamboler
123 Have unpaid bills
124 "Hiver" opposite
125 "— to Order" ('87 film)
126 Highflying agcy.

DOWN
1 Adroit
2 Ever's partner
3 Crowdburst?
4 Lincoln son
5 Pipe part
6 Turkish title
7 Den
8 "Newhart" setting
9 Holstein's home
10 Flagon filler
11 Patois
12 Beat
13 Felipe, Jesus, or Matty
14 Little one
16 South African port
17 Cholesterol letters
18 Golfer Ballesteros
20 Nigerian city
22 "Aida" river
24 Forest ruminant
28 Ciceronian speech
30 "GoodFellas" gun
31 Place to pontificate
32 Correct
33 Forward
34 Rover's review?
35 Presidential monogram
36 Sanctify
37 Tombstone lawman
39 Shakespearean heavy
40 Wholesome biker's publication?
41 Carpentry or printing
42 Monsieur Le Pew
44 Patriot Samuel
47 "Evita" character
50 — Park, CO
51 Uninteresting
52 Subdue Simba
55 Pavarotti's love
59 Bit of parsley
62 Northwestern st.
63 Mouth piece?
64 Anger or envy
65 Composer Albeniz
67 Slender trace
68 Be a wise guy
69 French impressionist
70 Chingachgook's son
71 Nailed a gnat
72 Boitano or Blessed
74 New York city
75 Require
76 The Kit — Club
77 In addition
78 Stocking shade
80 Antsy
83 Opera feature
84 Future of the present
85 Medieval menial
86 — de plume
89 One of the Jacksons
93 Gobbled up
95 Apparel
98 Debtors' letters
101 Stud site
103 Lhasa —
104 Cabbage concoction
105 Philosopher
106 Bronte heroine
107 Where to find an onager
108 "Veni, vidi, —"
109 Markey or Bagnold
110 Fisherman's snare
111 Chalky cheese
112 Skates
113 Gumbo thickener
115 Absent
117 City on the Danube
118 Ashen



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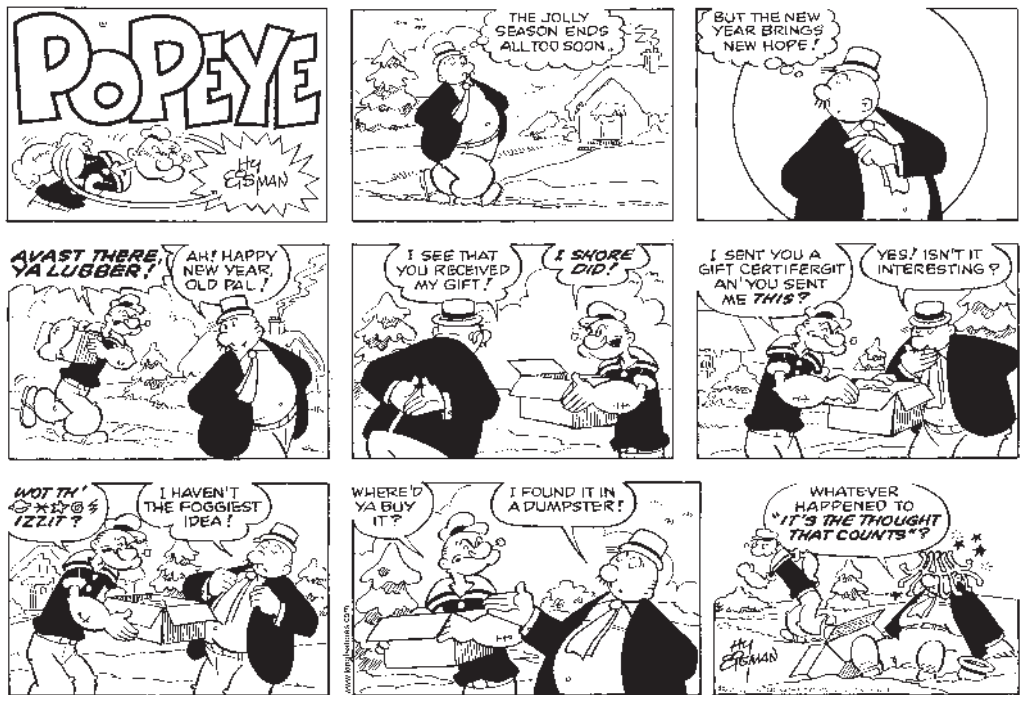
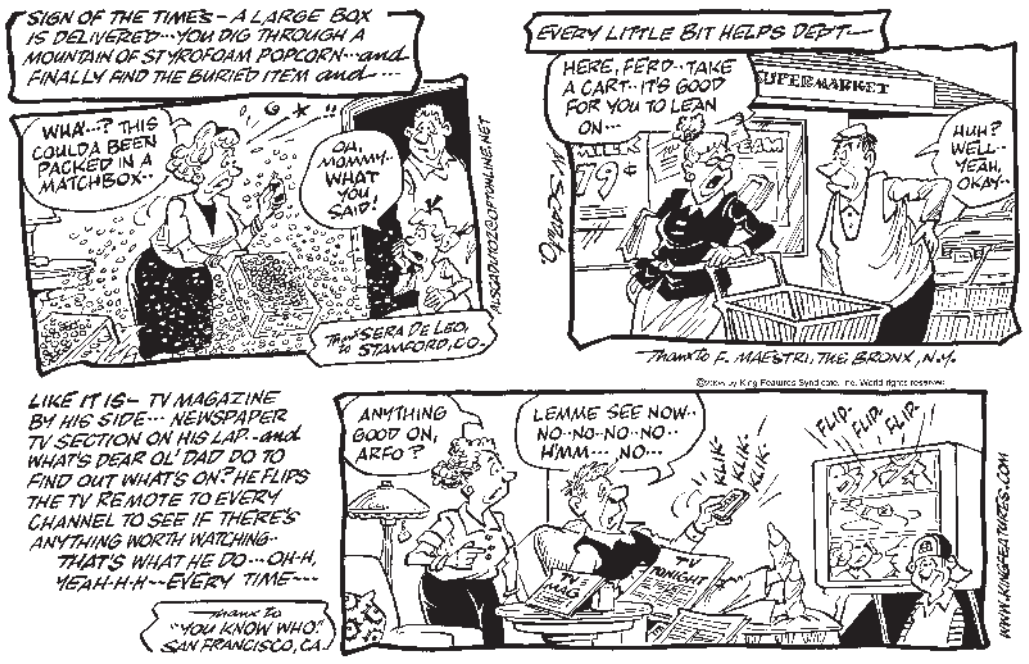
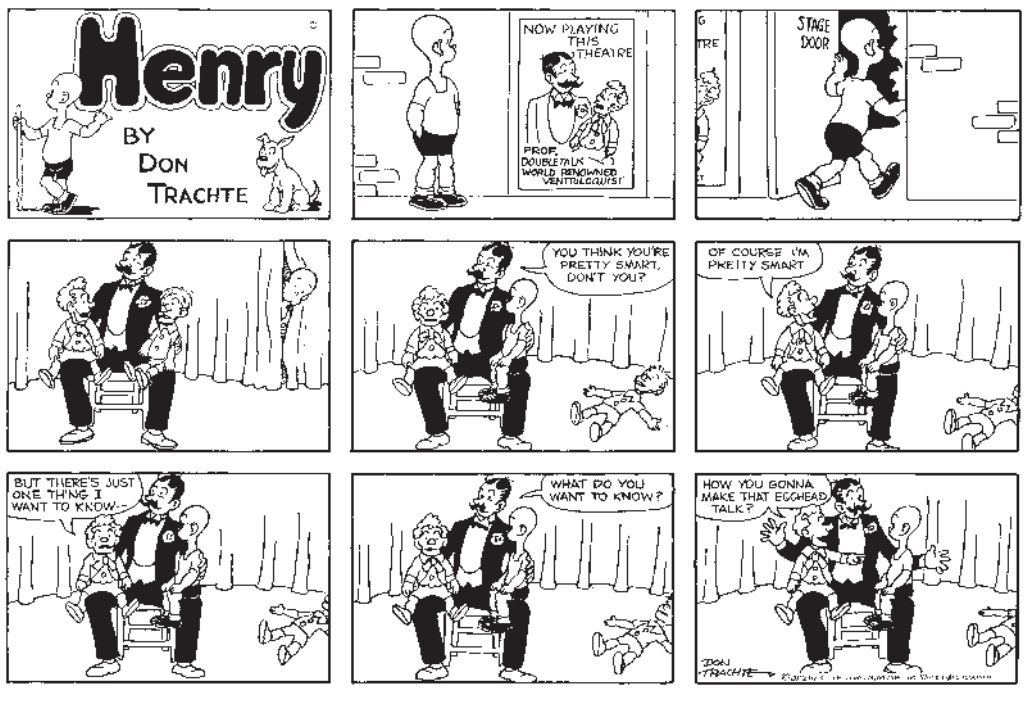

POPEYE
by ESSMAN
THE JOLLY SEASON ENDS ALL TOO SOON...
BUT THE NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW HOPE!
AVAST THERE, YA LUBBER!
AH! HAPPY NEW YEAR, OLD PAL!
I SEE THAT YOU RECEIVED MY GIFT!
I SHORE DID!
I SENT YOU A GIFT CERTIFERGIT AN' YOU SENT ME THIS?
YES! ISN'T IT INTERESTING?
WOT TH' ⊙*☆@§ IZZIT?
I HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST IDEA!
WHERE'D YA BUY IT?
I FOUND IT IN A DUMPSTER!
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO "IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS"?

They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto


SIGN OF THE TIMES - A LARGE BOX IS DELIVERED... YOU DIG THROUGH A MOUNTAIN OF STYROFOAM POPCORN... and FINALLY FIND THE BURIED ITEM and...
WHA...? THIS COULDA BEEN PACKED IN A MATCHBOX..
OH, MOMMY.. WHAT YOU SAID!
TANTSERA DE LEO, TO STAMFORD, CO.
EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS DEPT—
HERE, FERD.. TAKE A CART.. IT'S GOOD FOR YOU TO LEAN ON...
LIFEMARKET
MILK 79¢
GUM
HUH? WELL.. YEAH, OKAY..
Thanks to F. MAESTRI, THE BRONX, N.Y.
LIKE IT IS- TV MAGAZINE BY HIS SIDE... NEWSPAPER TV SECTION ON HIS LAP.. and WHAT'S DEAR OL' DAD DO TO FIND OUT WHAT'S ON? HE FLIPS THE TV REMOTE TO EVERY CHANNEL TO SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING WORTH WATCHING.. THAT'S WHAT HE DO... OH-H, YEAH-H-H--EVERY TIME...
Thanks to "YOU KNOW WHO." SAN FRANCISCO, CA
ANYTHING GOOD ON, ARFO?
LEMME SEE NOW.. NO..NO..NO..NO.. H'MM... NO...
KLIK-KLIK-KLIK-
FLIP-FLIP-FLIP
TV MAG
TV TONIGHT
WWW.KINGFEATURES.COM


Henry
BY DON TRACHTE
NOW PLAYING THIS THEATRE
PROF. DOUBLETALK WORLD RENOWNED VENTRILOQUIST
STAGE DOOR
YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY SMART, DON'T YOU?
OF COURSE I'M PRETTY SMART
BUT THERE'S JUST ONE THING I WANT TO KNOW...
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
HOW YOU GONNA MAKE THAT EGGHEAD TALK?
DON TRACHTE

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. COMICS: What is the name of Hi and Lois' youngest daughter?
2. HISTORY: Which Allied general defeated German field marshal Erwin Rommel in North Africa during World War II?
3. POETRY: Who was the Greek creator of pastoral poetry?
4. ART: Which Early Renaissance artist painted "The Birth of Venus"?
5. TELEVISION: Who were the only witnesses to the shooting of Mr. Burns on "The Simpsons"?
6. EXPLORERS: What was the nationality of explorer Edmund Hillary?
7. MUSIC: Which actress/singer's theme song was "Que Sera, Sera"?
8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the only bachelor to serve as U.S. president?
9. FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: What famous 20th-century leader once said, "If I had no sense of humor, I would long ago have committed suicide"?
10. LANGUAGE: What is the meaning of the word "aplomb"?

Saturday's Answers

Answers
1. Trixie
2. Gen. Bernard Montgomery
3. Theocritus
4. Botticelli
5. Maggie and Santa's Little Helper (the dog)
6. New Zealand
7. Doris Day
8. James Buchanan
9. Mohandas Gandhi
10. Confidence

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The Spats — by Jeff Pickering

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Saipan Grand Hotel
A TanHoldings Company

Position: (1) FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER
Qualifications: Strong background and experience in Food & Beverage preferably in the hospitality industry. Possess the ability to work quickly, accurately and independently in a fast-paced environment. 5 years work experience required preferably in a hotel. Supervisory duties include instructing; assigning, reviewing and planning work of others; maintaining standards; coordinating activities; allocating recommending and approving employee promotions, transfers and discipline, and recommending discharge. Inspects restaurant, picnic areas and cart groupings for safety, food quality and presentation, associate and guest interaction, and organization and cleanliness of front lines, kitchen and storage areas, etc. Recommends the purchase of additional / replacement equipment; obtains price quotes for and purchases supplies and other food / non-food products. Ensures locations prepare, present and serve food on a timely basis. Ensure areas are monitored and any variance from specifications corrected. Coordinates with the Food Purchasing area to develop, set and review menu cost, retail pricing and recipe cards including creating new food menu items and ways to present food attractively. Must be able to work a variable schedule on occasion, including early morning, evenings and/or weekends.

Position: (1) EXECUTIVE CHEF
Qualifications: 5 years work experience as a Sous Chef is required and preferably in the hospitality industry. The executive chef will train and manage kitchen personnel and supervise/coordinate all related culinary activities; estimate food consumption and requisition or purchase food; select and develop recipes; standardize production recipes to ensure consistent quality; establish presentation technique and quality standards; plan and price menus; ensure proper equipment operation/maintenance; and ensure proper safety and sanitation in kitchen. The executive chef may cook selected items or for select occasions. The executive chef may oversee special catering events and may also offer culinary instruction and/or demonstrate culinary techniques. The executive chef directly supervises kitchen personnel with responsibility for hiring, discipline, performance reviews and initiating pay increases. Typically reports to a food service director.

Position: (1) ROOMS DIVISION MANAGER
Qualifications: 5 years work experience preferably in the hotel industry. Able to plan, direct, and/or coordinate activities for the facility ensuring enjoyable experience for vacationing families and business travelers. Monitor departmental costs to ensure performance against budget. Must be able to solve problems quickly. Initiative, self-discipline and effective communication and interpersonal skills are essential. Proficient in Microsoft Office applications. Attend to crisis or emergency situations and perform service recovery. The ability to display a high degree of professionalism and integrity as befitting a member of management.

Position: (1) GUEST RELATION AGENT
Qualifications: 2 years work experience in providing quality customer service, preferably in hotel operations. Guest Relation Agent is responsible for providing guests fast, friendly and efficient service for the Chinese Tourim. Must have knowledge in Microsoft Office applications. Must have outstanding ability to perform several tasks at once. Must be able to work a flexible schedule including weekends, nights and holidays. Foreign language speaking skill is highly preferred.

Position: (1) TRAINING MANAGER
Qualifications: Minimum of 4 years work experience and training and must be a college graduate. Provides leadership and expertise for all Asia Pacific Hotel Saipan properties, primarily in tasks or functions of training, organizational development and employee relations and secondarily to provide assistance with programs of the Human Resources Division, to include but are not limited to quality control, work measurement, work methods and supervisory development. Consulting with other managers to identify training needs Drawing up an overall training plan managing a training budget producing materials for in-house training working with training providers to develop suitable course content evaluating the success of both individual training and the overall programmed. Managing regular staff appraisals and reviews, making sure staff have opportunities for ongoing development.

Position: (1) PROMOTIONS (EVENTS) MANAGER
Qualifications: Minimum of 2 years work experience and must be a college graduate. Must have working knowledge on overall hotel operations, sales and marketing promotions, departmental planning coordination of projects, activities, computer operation marketing, promotions, people management, different cultures and nationalities. Creating and managing a detailed budget is often a key component of event planning. When the client is a government organization, the coordinator must be aware of all applicable laws and ethics concerns. Hotel event manager is responsible for producing an outline of the event's needs. This outline includes such details as meeting space, lodging for guests, food and drink accommodations, telecommunications, audio-visual needs and transportation. Event coordinators also draw up a contract for the client to sign, spelling out all of the details agreed upon. Ability to speak a foreign language will be a plus.

P.O. Box 500369, Saipan, MP 96950-0369 • Tel. (670) 234-6601 • Fax. (670) 234-0410

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FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

WANTED TO BUY

Used Cars Wanted.
2002 above, Toyota preferred,
Cash your car. Pls call 888-2205

FOR SALE

2007 Toyota Corolla, silver, excellent condition 53,900 miles. Please call 287-7676.

WHATZIT Solution: Sleepover

(5) Housekeeper

Qualifications: Minimum of 2 years work experience preferably in a hotel. Must be able to speak and write in English. Ability to speak basic foreign language(s) a plus. Good customer service skills are essential. High School graduate or equivalent.

Please pick up and submit application at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's south wing security office. Applications must be submitted no later than January 10, 2012 to be considered.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

ƨГEEb

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Find today's solution in classified section

Wade, James sit as Heat outlast Hawks in 3OT

ATLANTA (AP)—There may be no need for LeBron James and Dwyane Wade to rush their return from injuries.

Mario Chalmers and Chris Bosh proved Thursday night they can play the starring roles for the Miami Heat.

With James and Wade cheering from the bench, Bosh scored 33 points and the Heat beat the Atlanta Hawks 116-109 in triple-overtime.

Chalmers had 22 of his 29 points after the third quarter for the Heat, including five of Miami's seven points in the third overtime.

"Coach said I had to be aggressive," Chalmers said.

Wade missed his second straight game with a sore left foot and James was held out after he turned his left ankle late in the third quarter of Wednesday night's 118-83 win over Indiana. Neither star was in uniform.

Bosh hit a last-second, tying 3-pointer at the end of regulation to force the first overtime.

"It was a lucky shot," Bosh said.

Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said his team survived a test of its character.

"That game, the way it went down in the end, was an exercise in absolute endurance and mental and physical toughness," Spoelstra said.

"Both teams played their hearts out there at the end."

Joe Johnson had 20 points for the Hawks, who did not score in the third extra period. It was only the 10th time in NBA history a team did not score in an overtime period.

Josh Smith added 17 points and 13 rebounds for Atlanta, which was seeking its second win over the Heat in four days but missed 15 of 46 free throws.

Hawks coach Larry Drew said his players ignored his warning against a letdown if James and Wade didn't play.

"There was a total, total mental letdown," Drew said, adding his players lacked the spark they had when they won 100-92 in Miami on Monday.

"I didn't see the sense of urgency I saw in Miami," Drew said. "The tendency is to let your guard down, and we certainly did tonight."

Bosh, the only healthy member of Miami's Big Three, also had 14 rebounds. Rookie Terrel Harris had nine points and 14 rebounds.

The Hawks led 93-90 when Bosh launched the tying 3-point attempt from the wing over Marvin Williams with only six-tenths of a second remaining in regulation.

Miami took a 67-54 lead on a 3-pointer by Chalmers midway through the third before the Hawks closed the quarter with a 16-1 run to take control.

Little-used rookie Ivan Johnson was a big surprise with 13 points for Atlanta. Johnson, an undrafted player from Cal State-San Bernardino, had a steal and jam to cut Miami's lead to one point and then closed the third quarter with two free throws to give the Hawks their first lead of the second half.

Ivan Johnson and Al Horford fouled out in the third overtime.

Drew saw he turned to Ivan Johnson and Willie Green, who had 14 points, because he was "really searching" for players who showed "a sense of urgency."

Spoelstra said before the game Wade "was a little bit more unlikely" than James to play. Afterward, Spoelstra said he was trying to protect Wade from a more serious injury.

"He's making progress with it, but we really want to take care of this before it's something that can linger," Spoelstra said.

Wade hurt his foot at Charlotte on Dec. 28.

James participated in pregame warmups but his status for Miami's game at New Jersey on Saturday remains uncertain.

"He's walking around and hopefully he'll be able to play soon," Spoelstra said. "Whether that will be Saturday, I don't know."

James and Wade were often active and animated as they watched from Miami's bench, at times leaping up as they reacted to plays.

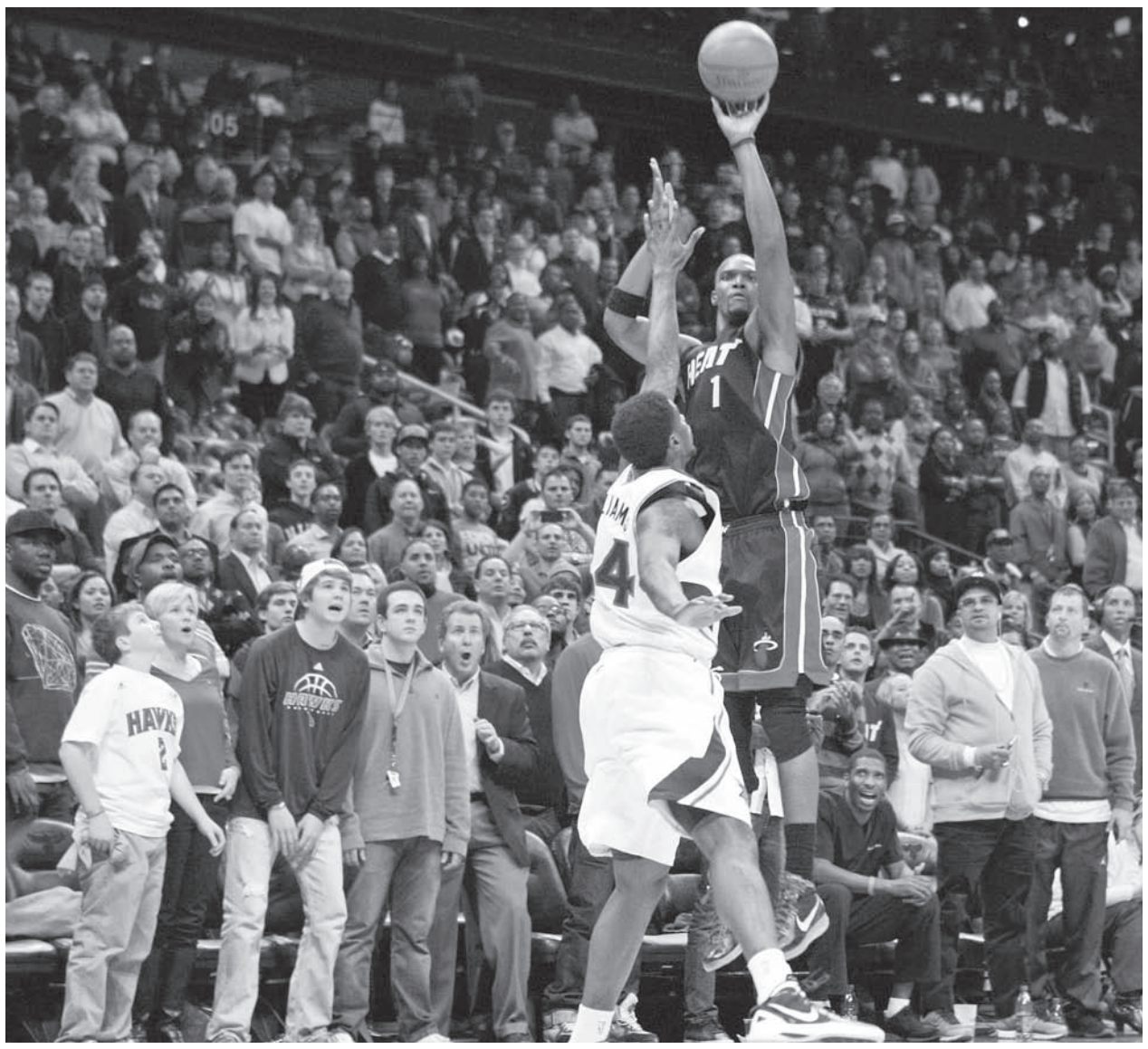
James Jones and Shane Battier were the fill-in starters.

"I hope the guys realize it doesn't matter who's in the uniform, it's the standard of play," said Battier, who had nine points and played a lead role in defending Joe Johnson, who made only 7 of 20 shots from the field.

"I've been in a lot of games in my 10 years in the league and this is right up there," Battier said.

The Hawks, whose win at Miami gave the Heat their only loss, struggled with poor shooting as there were 17 lead changes in the first half.

Miami led 54-49 at halftime.



AP

Miami Heat forward Chris Bosh lauches a 3-point shot over Atlanta Hawks Marvin Williams to tie the game at the end of regulation 93-93 to force overtime at Philips Arena in Atlanta on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012.

Kings fire Westphal, bring in Smart as new coach

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—The Sacramento Kings fired coach Paul Westphal on Thursday, cutting ties after two-plus seasons amid a slow start and an escalating dispute with young center DeMarcus Cousins.

Kings president of basketball operations Geoff Petrie made the announcement ahead of the team's home game against Milwaukee on Thursday night. Assistant Keith Smart, let go by the Golden State Warriors this summer after one season, signed a deal to become the team's head coach—with Westphal's blessing.

Looking to build momentum for a new arena project, Sacramento stumbled at the start again this year. A talented and athletic—albeit raw—roster led by Westphal is 2-5 and in last place in the Pacific Division.

"I want to thank Paul for all of his effort on behalf of the Kings," Petrie said. "Unfortunately, the overall performance level of the team has not approached what we felt was reasonable to expect. I wish him the best in his future endeavors."

In two-plus seasons leading the Kings, Westphal finished with a 51-120 record. The 61-year-old previously coached the Phoenix Suns and Seattle SuperSonics.

"I would like to thank the Maloof family for the incredible opportunity they gave me to participate in the attempt to bring the Sacramento Kings back to prominence," Westphal said. "While the job is far from finished, I am proud of the strides we were able to make.

"Finally, I want to thank my loyal staff and players for their efforts in attempting to climb out of the hole we shared. Nothing comes easy in the NBA and I know they will not rest in their efforts to rebuild this team."

In the last week, all of Westphal's efforts in California's capital shattered.

He abruptly released a statement Sunday criticizing Cousins' commitment to the franchise and excused him from the team's game against New Orleans. He also said Cousins asked for a trade, which the center's agent refuted.

Cousins had played in the past two games, losing at Memphis and Denver on consecutive nights.

Sacramento drafted Cousins with the fifth overall pick in 2010 after he spent one season at Kentucky. The 21-year-old was averaging 13.7 points and 9.3 rebounds in 26 minutes per game this season.

Cousins' behavior has been well documented going back to high school and his one season at Kentucky, mixing in dramatic and astonishing plays with outbursts against players, coaches, trainers and referees. His conditioning has been questioned and so has his work ethic. However, he showed up for training camp in prime condition and appeared ready for a breakout season.

Teamed with 2009-10 rookie of the year Tyreke Evans, Cousins was expected to anchor the front line for a young and emerging roster in the deep Western Conference. Sacramento finished 24-58 last season and missed the playoffs for the fifth straight year, although a late-season surge behind a healthy Evans provided hope that maybe the Kings weren't that far off from making the postseason again.

Kings owners Joe and Gavin Maloof simply couldn't wait any longer.

The NBA and the Maloofs have given Sacramento a March 1 deadline to approve a plan to help finance a new arena, or the franchise could again explore relocation. The Kings nearly moved south to Anaheim, Calif., in April before the league's Board of Governors decided to give Sacramento another chance.

Smart, the Indiana guard best known for hitting "The Shot" against Syracuse that won the Hoosiers the 1987 NCAA title, spent seven years as an assistant with Golden State before he replaced the ousted Don Nelson just before training camp last year. The Warriors went 36-46 under Smart, a 10-game improvement from the previous season but not enough to appease new owners Joe Lacob and Peter Guber.

"I had a chance to work for Paul Westphal in the brief time that I've been here and really enjoyed it," Smart said. "He was very supportive every step of the way. I want to thank Geoff Petrie and the Maloof family for giving me this opportunity. I'm looking forward to implementing a few new things with what we want to try to do with our basketball team. Hopefully, they'll respond to what I want them to do, and I believe they will. I think our players will be excited with some of the ideas that I have for our team moving forward."

Trail Blazers 107, Lakes 96

In Portland, Gerald Wallace had 31 points and sparked a key third-quarter run to lead the Portland Trail Blazers to a fast-paced victory over the Los Angeles Lakers.

LaMarcus Aldridge added 28 points and 10 rebounds for Portland, which led by as many as 14 points. The Blazers had just four turnovers despite pushing the tempo for the entire game.

The Blazers sit atop the Western Conference at 5-1 - their lone loss coming on New Year's Day at the Clippers.

Kobe Bryant scored 30 points despite a torn ligament in his right wrist, and Andrew Bynum had 21 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers, who have had trouble at the Rose Garden with losses in 11 of their last 13 game in Portland.

Los Angeles went 0 for 11 from 3-point range.

Kings 103, Bucks 100

In Sacramento, Tyreke Evans made four free throws in the final minute to finish with 26 points, and Sacramento overcame a 21-point halftime deficit to stun Milwaukee hours after the Kings fired coach Paul Westphal.

Evans hit the go-ahead free throws with 18.1 seconds remaining and followed with two more to make former assistant and Golden State Warriors coach Keith Smart a winner in his Kings head coaching debut.

Marcus Thornton scored 27 points and DeMarcus Cousins finished with 19 points and 15 rebounds for the Kings, completing a stretch of three games in three nights at 1-2.

Brandon Jennings scored 31 points, and Drew Gooden had 18 and nine rebounds for the Bucks.

Spurs 93, Mavericks 71

In San Antonio, Matt Bonner scored 17 points and San Antonio limited Dirk Nowitzki to just six in a win over Dallas.

Richard Jefferson scored 16 points and Gary Neal added 12 for the Spurs, who held Nowitzki to his lowest scoring output since he had five points in a Dec. 18, 2009, game that he left early because of injury.

Jason Terry scored 12 points and Delonte West had 10 to lead Dallas, which lost point guard Jason Kidd to a lower back injury with 24.7 seconds remaining in the first quarter. Kidd, who appeared to pull up, was replaced by Vince Carter and didn't return.

Report: Pats assistant O'Brien to Penn State

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP)—New England Patriots offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien will be Penn State's first new head football coach in nearly a half-century, according to multiple reports.

ESPN, citing unnammed sources, first reported Thursday night that an official announcement would be made Saturday, and that O'Brien would continue on as an assistant with the Patriots the rest of the postseason.

Penn State coaches contacted by The Associated Press said they had not received any word late Thursday night about O'Brien or anything else related to the two-month long search to replace Hall of Famer Joe Paterno. The Nittany Lions' leader for 46 seasons was fired Nov. 9 in the aftermath of child sex abuse charges against retired defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky.

O'Brien has no apparent ties to Penn State, rocked by a scandal that also led the departure of school president Graham Spanier.

A Patriots spokesperson declined comment. Penn State athletics spokesman Jeff Nelson cited department policy to not comment on reports to "protect the integrity of the search."

O'Brien interviewed on Thursday, his agent said. In fact, Joe Linta told The Associated Press, earlier Thursday, that O'Brien was "flattered by the interest."

USA Today first reported that O'Brien was scheduled to interview, citing an unidentified person with knowledge of the situation.

This was O'Brien's first year coordinating the Patriots' high-scoring offense, but he coached star quarterback Tom Brady since 2009. He spent 2008 coaching receivers.

"He's been a great coach and friend. We have a great relationship; probably a very unique relationship in that we communicate all the time," Brady said Sunday about O'Brien. "I always enjoy working with him and he's done an incredible job with this team and this offense."

The Patriots are off this week, and will host a divisional round playoff game next weekend. They went 13-3 this season, won the AFC East championship going away, and secured the conference's No. 1 seed throughout the playoffs.

New England closed the regular season on an eight-game winning streak, and scored 513 points, the most in the AFC. Brady threw for 5,235 yards and 39 touchdowns, while being picked off just 12 times.

"I don't know what's going to happen," Brady said when asked if he would miss O'Brien's coaching. "I hope he's here for a long time and I told him that too."

O'Brien first joined New England in 2007 following 14 seasons on the collegiate level, including stops at Duke, Maryland and Georgia Tech. He played college football at Brown—Paterno's alma mater.

Paterno, Division I's winningest coach with 409 victories, coached 46 seasons before being ousted by trustees.

Penn State officials had termed the search "methodical and deliberate." Acting athletic director David Joyner had said he would like to give Paterno's replacement at least a few weeks to recruit before high school seniors can begin to announce their official intentions to attend college on Feb. 1.

Defensive coordinator Tom Bradley, who took over for Paterno on an interim basis, also interviewed. Bradley was on the road recruiting Thursday, the second of a four-day recruiting contact period. Another 16-day contact window starts Jan. 13.

AP

In this Dec. 14, 2011, file photo, New England Patriots offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Bill O'Brien talks with quarterback Tom Brady (12) during NFL football practice in Foxborough, Mass. O'Brien's agent said he was interviewing Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012, for the vacant Penn State head-coaching position.

"I believe the search is continuing and progressing very well as we hoped it would," Joyner said during a taped segment at halftime of the radio broadcast of Thursday night's basketball game between Purdue and Penn State. "I anticipate having a new head coach in place in time to take full advantage of the open period that's coming up."

Calls and emails of interest from qualified potential applicants were still coming in, Joyner said during the segment.

Defensive line coach Larry Johnson also received an interview. Two persons with knowledge of the search also confirmed earlier reports that Paterno's son, quarterback coach Jay Paterno, interviewed for the job. The persons requested anonymity because no one was authorized to speak about the search.

San Francisco 49ers offensive coordinator Greg Roman interviewed in November and his agent said this week he was on the "short list" for the job.

Among other rumored names, Tennessee Titans coach Mike Munchak denied interest in the job three times since his former coach was fired. And Green Bay quarterbacks coach Tom Clements declined comment when asked if he was interested in the job and would not confirm a report that he had interviewed.

The Patriots are third in the NFL overall in scoring (32.1 points per game), and second in total offense (428 yards) and passing (317.8 yards).

Penn State finished a 9-4 campaign with a 30-14 loss in the TicketCity Bowl to Houston on Jan. 2. The Nittany Lions relied on defense much of the year this after the offense struggled with a two-quarterback system.

A new start on PGA Tour with plenty of new faces

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Steve Stricker is back on Maui, a familiar place for a guy who has won on the PGA Tour in each of the last three years to qualify for the season-opening Tournament of Champions.

Not so familiar are some of the guys he'll be trying to beat.

Twelve players in the 28-man field are at Kapalua for the first time, more evidence of change on the PGA Tour. A year ago, Stricker didn't know who most of them were.

Keegan Bradley? He was known more as the nephew of LPGA great Pat Bradley until he won two times, including that unlikely comeback in Atlanta to capture the PGA Championship in his first try at a major.

Jhonattan Vegas was the first PGA Tour member from Venezuela. Scott Stallings? Brendan Steele?

"I know them now a little bit," Stricker said Thursday on the eve of the opening round.

The PGA Tour season gets under way Friday. It wants to get away from the NFL playoffs on Sunday, so the final round will end Monday just before the BCS Championship game starts.

The Tournament of Champions will be missing 11 players who didn't or couldn't make it to Hawaii. It's the biggest list of no-shows since this tournament moved to Kapalua in 1999, though it's a product of the changing world of golf.

Three of the players are recovering from injuries, five of them are based overseas and Luke Donald, the No. 1 player in the world, just finished a whirlwind trip around the world that took him deep into December. Like many other players, this is his offseason.

That's not the only change.

Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods are no longer part of the top 10 in the world ranking. There are no Americans among the top five in the world ranking for the first time in nearly two decades. And even without the likes of U.S. Open champion Rory McIlroy, Masters champion Charl Schwartzel or Martin Kaymer in Hawaii, the young guys are making a strong push.

There were 13 winners in their 20s last year, and nine of them are at Kapalua

"There's been a transformation of players out here, and it was going to happen eventually," said Stricker, who turns 45 next month. "We saw Tiger and Phil slip out of the top 10, and we have some European players coming in there—young European players and young Americans—playing well and stepping right up early on in their careers. So it's fun to see.

"Right now it seems that young is good."

His hope is that experience still counts for something, especially on the Plantation Course at Kapalua that is unlike any other course the players will see all year. The course was built on a mountain, offering severe changes in elevation, massive greens with slope and grain, and uninterrupted views of the Pacific Ocean.

The surf has been particularly strong on Maui this week, and it creates quite the contrast. Players working their way along the way back nine can look down the cliffs and see the ocean littered with surfers off the point at Honolua Bay.

It's relaxing, but it's still work.

The winners get a small head start on the rest of the PGA Tour in a short field with no cut, essentially free money from the $5.6 million purse and a jump in the FedEx Cup standings.

It worked beautifully last year for Jonathan Byrd, who won his final event of 2010 to qualify for Kapalua, then opened his season with a playoff win over Robert Garrigus.

Byrd was walking through the Maui airport when he saw promotional posters of him on the wall. His son, Jackson, looked at the poster and said, "Dad, I think you're famous."

"I said, `At least for this week I am,'" Byrd replied. "You get out there and you just get excited to get the year started."

So many of these players are looking for an encore, especially Bradley.

A year ago, he was getting ready for his rookie season to begin at the Sony Open and being more nervous than he cares to remember. He never would have imagined winning a major, much less returning to Hawaii a week earlier to start his season.

"I was a mess. I was so uptight about it," Bradley said. "At this time last year, I wasn't thinking this tournament at all. I was thinking about how I wasn't ready to play on the tour, how I needed to practice 12 hours a day to get ready. So it's pretty remarkable to be here."

Now comes the hard part.

Bradley will try to build on his big year, the same as FedEx Cup champion Bill Haas and Webb Simpson, who was second in the FedEx Cup and lost out on the money title to Donald in the final event. Simpson didn't qualify for this tournament until the week before the FedEx Cup playoffs began.

Vegas won the Bob Hope Classic, and then didn't do much the rest of the year. Woodland won in the Florida swing and made the cut in every major. He has big potential to go with his big swing, though he starts the year by taking on a new agent (Mark Steinberg) that wound up costing him his old coach (Randy Smith).

And while the 28-man field ties the Kapalua record for the smallest number of players, it could get even smaller. Lucas Glover sprained his right knee while paddle boarding over the weekend and is not sure he will be able to play.

"I hate to come out here and not be able to compete," he said. "But it could be worse. I could be somewhere not as pretty."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	3	2	.600	–
Boston	4	3	.571	–
Toronto	3	3	.500	1/2
New York	2	4	.333	1 1/2
New Jersey	1	6	.143	3

Southeast Division

Miami	7	1	.875	–
Orlando	5	2	.714	1 1/2
Atlanta	4	3	.571	2 1/2
Charlotte	2	4	.333	4
Washington	0	6	.000	6

Central Division

Chicago	6	1	.857	–
Indiana	4	2	.667	1 1/2
Cleveland	3	3	.500	2 1/2
Detroit	2	4	.333	3 1/2
Milwaukee	2	4	.333	3 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	5	2	.714	–
Memphis	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Dallas	3	5	.375	2 1/2
Houston	2	4	.333	2 1/2
New Orleans	2	4	.333	2 1/2

Northwest Division

Portland	5	1	.833	–
Denver	5	2	.714	1/2
Oklahoma City	5	2	.714	1/2
Utah	3	3	.500	2
Minnesota	2	4	.333	3

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	3	2	.600	–
L.A. Lakers	4	4	.500	1/2
Sacramento	3	5	.375	1 1/2
Phoenix	2	4	.333	1 1/2
Golden State	2	4	.333	1 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Miami 116, Atlanta 109, 3OT
San Antonio 93, Dallas 71
Sacramento 103, Milwaukee 100
Portland 107, L.A. Lakers 96

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pat Taitano ends year with a bang

Pat Taitano raced to the top of the winner's bracket and took top honors in 19th Hole's final 8-ball tournament of 2011 held last Dec. 29.

Taitano had to get by perennial champion Pat Cepeda and Norman Tenorio to reach the winners bracket final against Juanette Atalig.

Tenorio took a close match from Ed Suzuki, but shot himself in the foot against Taitano by accidentally pocketing the 8-ball early.

J.J. Atalig sent Phil Fejeran to the loser's bracket, but left too many openings to wife Juanette.

Suzuki continued his strong play, eliminating Cepeda and getting a break when J.J. Atalig also pocketed the 8-ball early.

Energized by his early loss, Tenorio came back with concentration, cue ball control and shot-making. He eliminated Jack Cruz, Suzuki, and Juanette Atalig, then grabbed the first finals game from Taitano.

As winner's bracket finalist Taitano had a game to give. Their third meeting went back-and-forth. with both players mixing terrific shots with mental mistakes.

The smooth-stroking Taitano finished the game and match when Tenorio gave him a shot with easy shape on the 8-ball.

Taitano took home half of the pot, with Tenorio getting 30 percent for second place and Juanette Atalig 20 percent for third.

The first 2012 8-ball tournament was set last Thursday. Sign-ins start at 7pm for the double elimination matches. The entry fee is $10.

Sign-ups are continuing for 19th Hole's two-member Tag Team league. Two-person teams face off in two singles and one doubles match every weekend for a month with the first, second and third place teams splitting the entry fees.

For more information, you can contact Rose or Ken Phillips at 788-5929. Send text messages to that number or to 788-3913. ***(PR)***

ROLLERS

From Page 28

we have a lot of fundraising to do, I have faith in my boys. We have never traveled this far before and I think it will be a great experience for the kids," said Joe Diaz in an interview Tuesday.

The RBC's adult Rollers, meanwhile, are planning its second appearance in Guam's March Madness tournament and will travel alongside the Typhoons to appear in its own competition in the Philippines later in November.

After facing stiff competition its first time around, the Rollers were invited back to the March Madness tourney to contend in the recreational division.

Being the start of a new year, RBC is currently collecting membership renewals and new members are always welcome.

The group has a lot of activities lined up for 2012 and was fortunate to pick up some more coaches in 2011.

John Dela Cruz and Eli Rangamar have come in to help coach RBC's youth divisions along with veteran players Paul Camacho and Fred Litulumar.

RBC's David Diaz and Lawrence and Rainer DeLeon Guerrero are the next generation of seasoned players that also help out as recreational referees. Various other players also volunteer as table officials along with Diaz's fiancé Verna Babauta.

According to Diaz, Litulumar and Camacho have been refereeing for about two years and both underwent first-level referee certification through Unified Basketball Association. Rufino Aguon and James Lee instructed the course.

Diaz hopes the pair continues to progress as referees because it would have a great impact on the reputation of the club.

"All of these guys serve as excellent mentors not just because they invest a lot of time in developing our younger guys not just as players but as people. They coach, oversee practices, and I particularly like the idea of Fred and Paul taking on the challenge to serve as certified referees," said Diaz.

Notably, Rangamar has ties to FIBA and may help the duo register for some of its training courses in the future. Camacho and Litulumar currently hold a Level 0 recreational referee status.

Looking back to last year, Diaz observed significant improvement in his U15 Docomo Rollers.

"Everyone is coming along great across the board, but the Docomo guys have been playing together for two years now and their chemistry really shined through in 2011. I am proud of the way they competed in Guam and am really looking forward to see what they do this year," said Diaz.

Diaz noted Irvyn Malonzo, Prince Factor, J.P. Iglesias, Emerson Feria, Ted Divero, Toshi Pangelinan, Sam Darag, Mike Espinosa, and Alcor Admana as just some of the most improved players in 2011.

Right now, the club is finishing up its 2nd Annual IT&E Youth Christmas Tournament, which was originally scheduled from Dec. 28 to 30, but had to be postponed due to rain. The U12, U15, and U17 division championship matches start tonight at 5pm in Garapan.

Then after a two-week break, the RBC convoy will take part in the Garapan Community Development Center's Family Fun-A-Thon on Jan. 28.

The event features a 3-on-3 basketball tournament where the whole family can get on the action. There will also be volleyball and other various side games.

Medals and prizes will be awarded to the top two place finishers of their respective divisions. Awards will also be presented to the winners of GCDC's 3-on-3 Christmas Basketball Tournament held last December.

The Family Fun-A-Thon is open to the public as the purpose of GCDC's event is to get the word out to the public that its services are ready and available.

The GCDC offers daily after-school programs and forms of counseling throughout he week.

In February, the RBC plans to send its U15 players over to Tinian for some camping mixed with some healthy competition on the hardwood.

Then the next big mark on its calendar is the group's fourth appearance in Guam's Take Care Thanksgiving Hoop Fest.

"The Guam trip is by far what my players have looked forward to the most in recent years. The best part is that they have shown a lot of improvement and I am really curious to see how well they fare this year. We won a few recreational divisions, so we might mix things up and assemble more than one team in the competitive divisions," said Diaz.

Diaz also said he might focus on bringing only the RBC's younger age groups and work separately with his older players.

"I want to mesh together my U18 players with the adults in an effort to create a more diverse squad with a variety of weapons. I think both the older and the younger up-and-coming players will benefit from the move. I've also found that it's just too hard to watch overall five age divisions at once. I think things would run smoother in general if we break it up into two main groups," said Diaz.

The RBC is just shy of 100 members in five age divisions and its youth classes hold weekly practice sessions at the Garapan Basketball Court.

There is $70 annual fee to become a member. The money goes to uniforms, water, ice, and incentives for coaches and referees. Members will also receive an ID badge, which can be redeemed for various local discounts.

They play basketball year round, conduct a variety of creative independent fundraisers, and participate in a number of civil services such as beach clean ups.

Call RBC's Diaz at 285-4141 for more information or email joediaz41@gmail.com. You can also visit www.rollersbasketballclub.yolasite.com or look them up on Facebook.

SRCR

From Page 28

members this year and see which beginners will rise through the ranks and take on some of the veteran racers," stated SRCR front man Rodney Catalla.

In response to the halt of the Nitro Truggy heats Catalla said, "It is difficult to keep gassing and fixing the nitro cars after practices and events. They use a special type of fuel and other special parts that can be quite costly. Most of the new and younger members have electric cars anyways, so we might break out the truggy cars now and again this season, but are focusing primarily on the electric races."

The club changes its closed course twice a year.

This year the club would like to host a friendship event featuring off-island racers from Guam, Tinian, and Rota.

There are now just fewer than 30 active SRCR members, which regularly take part in practices at the As Lito track every Saturday from 2pm to 6pm.

In addition, the SRCR tries to hold a daylong race, once a month, usually on a Sunday from 9am to 5pm in their three racing classes. The public is welcome to check out the track to learn more about their sport hobby.

For more information, contact Catalla at 234-5911, 256-7119, or email drrc35@yahoo.com.

KING

From Page 28

instruction coupled with state-of-the-art equipment including Flightscope X-1 and V-1 Golf application software.

These programs are used to record the total distance, carrying distance, spin, speed, launch angels and a predetermined "smash" factor as a club-fitting tool for the students.

Pro golfer Mark Steinbauer, who is credited as one of the PGA's top 100 golf instructors, is IGA's director of instruction. He makes a fixed number of appearances to monitor the program's progress.

Steinbauer has worked with renowned PGA pro K.J. Choi, eight-year pro Roland Thatcher, and had eight new prospects attend the PGA Qualification School this past November.

Davis has resided in Steinbauer place as lead instructor along with some members from the Mark Steinbauer Training Center in Woodland, Texas.

Endorsed by Taylormade and Adidas, IGA's full-time academy runs for 10 months through the year for students of ages 6 to 18. Its after-school and short mini-camp programs are offered to beginner and experienced golfers.

Other services include club fitting, tournament clinics, an introduction to golf tour, and private lessons available to the public. Interested patrons are encouraged to call and inquire about local discounts

For more information call IGA instructor Aaron Wood at 989-2456 or visit www.igasaipan.com.

TEBOW

From Page 28

ning a replay of the New Year's Day debacle in Denver when the Broncos could manage only three points against Kansas City.

Don't bother looking for the highlights. There weren't any.

In a game the Broncos figured they had to win to make the playoffs, Tebow was beyond awful. He completed just 6 of 22 passes for just 60 yards, fumbled with his team inside the red zone and threw a late interception.

More troubling for the Broncos, though, has to be that Tebow seems to be regressing. Teams are forcing him to stay in the pocket more, and it's clearly a place he's not comfortable. His touch on short passes is awful, and he slings the ball on long ones as though he's playing street ball with the neighbors before heading inside to eat dinner.

Worst of all, the magic seems to be gone. And without that, Tebow is pretty much what he was when the Broncos started the season—a third-string quarterback with a skill set that worked magic in college but isn't well suited for the NFL.

John Elway understood that early in Tebow's remarkable run when he dismissed suggestions that the Broncos had found their quarterback of the future. The Broncos' boss has changed his tune some since then, but his ride on the Tebow bandwagon has been a cautious one at best.

Elway suggested this week that Tebow has a shot at playing his way out of his funk. What he needs to do, the Hall of Fame quarterback said, is make quicker decisions and stop being tentative with his passes.

In other words, start acting like a real NFL quarterback.

"The more you get into tighter games, playoff games, you've got to be aggressive," Tebow said after Wednesday's practice. "You've also got to be smart, but you've got to be aggressive and pull the trigger at times."

It's not that simple, of course. But, with just seven days between games, there's only so much that can be done to get Tebow ready for a blitzing Steelers defense that will be the best Tebow has faced in his young career.

Oddsmakers don't figure it will be much of a contest, making the Steelers an 8-point road favorite despite Pittsburgh having quarterback issues of its own. Ben Roethlisberger is gimpy, but he also owns two Super Bowl rings and tends to up his game in the playoffs.

Tebow has never been in the playoffs, and his first trip there figures to be a short one. The Broncos are 120-1 underdogs in Vegas to win the NFL title, a line that was inflated simply to try to get some Tebow believers to back their man with hard cash.

"No chance—absolutely no chance," Cantor Race & Sports Director Mike Colbert said, referring to Denver's chances of winning it all.

Don't tell that to Tebow, who remains relentlessly upbeat even as a once magical season unravels.

"It's exciting," he said. "What a great opportunity it is and it is a blessing. I know it will be a rocking environment Sunday and it will be a lot of fun."

There's a chance it could be. There's also a chance Tebow has one more surprise left in a season full of surprises.

More likely, though, is that Tebow Time has already come and gone.

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Rollers eyeing two trips to PH in 2012

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Rollers Basketball Club has multiple off-island competitions lined up for 2012, two of which includes the group's first-ever journey to the Philippines.

Head coach Joe Diaz and the Rollers were invited by Tamuning Typhoons Basketball Club head coach Else Ulloa to travel together and compete in the 2012 Manila-Pacific Rim Goodwill Games slated from July 23 to July 30. The two clubs will field teams in the U14B and U15B age groups.

"This is an exciting opportunity for our players and although

See ROLLERS on Page 27

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

A Rollers A player steals the ball and takes off the other way for a fastbreak in Tuesday's IT&E Christmas Youth Basketball Tournament U12 matchup against Rollers AA at the Garapan Basketball Court.

'King of Aces' on island through January

Davis

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Local golfers are in for a treat this month as they can learn the game from no less than world-acclaimed "King of Aces" Mancil Davis who will be on the island the whole of January.

The International Golf Academy's head instructor holds the Professional Golfers Association's world record for most official hole-in-ones with 51.

"We offer top quality golf instruction and we even offer a local discount for local golfers interested taking private lessons. Our head instructor Mancil Davis is back on island for the month of January if anyone wants to take advantage of the rare opportunity to learn from a real pro," said IGA instructor Aaron Wood over the phone yesterday.

Davis is the PGA of America and PGA hole-in-one record holder. He recently returned to Saipan after a holiday break.

IGA started its first semester last August and it ran until November 2011. It had three full-time students. The academy also fielded a pair of junior golfers in last year's after-school program.

When not undergoing golf instruction the students go to classes at Saipan International School.

In addition, the IGA instructed 20 students from Korea in its Winter Camp.

The IGA has just started its second semester this month and is expecting more full-time students from Korea later in March.

See KING on Page 27

SRCR welcomed nine new members in 2011

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Saipan Radio Control Racers Association added nine new members in 2011 and offered two new racing classes.

Due to maintenance and fuel costs SRCR members went away from its 1/8 Nitro Truggy class and released an open division to complement its current 1/10 electric short course A-Main class. The group also unveiled its growing "Young Gun" beginner electric short course class.

"We are hoping to gain more

See SRCR on Page 27

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Two 1/10 Electric Short Course Stock car racers ramp over a table top in last August's Saipan Radio Control Racers Club race at the As Lito track.

By TIM DAHLBERG
AP Sports Columnist

Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press.

Tebow Time has already come and gone

It was fun in a way the NFL often isn't, a midseason diversion that sent fans into a frenzy in Denver and prompted people around the country to drop to a knee. Even if you didn't believe in Tim Tebow, it was hard to take your eyes off him as he found ways to win despite passes that fluttered about like balloons on a windy day.

That it wasn't pretty hardly mattered. Somehow, some way, Tebow got the Denver Broncos an invitation to the playoffs for the first time in six years—something that seemed unimaginable after the team sputtered to a 1-4 start.

Now he's got to do something even more unimaginable. Find a way to regroup after finishing the season in a funk and beat the banged-up but still intimidating Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday in Denver.

Do it, and the cult of Tebow grows. Kids will be Tebowing at recess, while their fathers practice the art in their offices.

Fall short, and maybe it's time to start facing reality.

Tebow is not just the worst quarterback in the playoffs, leader of a team that scored the least points of any team in the postseason. He may be the worst quarterback in the NFL.

OK, maybe not worse than Curtis Painter, who had the unfortunate task of filling in for Peyton Manning in Indianapolis. And it's true that Blaine Gabbert was atrocious this year in Jacksonville.

But you get the picture. If not, the NFL Network is likely run-

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